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AN EXPOSITION OF VULGAR & COMMON ERRORS ADAPTED TO THE YEAR OF GRACE MDCCCXLV.

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Small Books on Great Subjects.

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TO KNOWLEDGE.

N°. VIII.

AN EXPOSITION OF

VULGAR AND COMMON ERRORS

ADAPTED TO THE YEAR OF

GRACE MDCCCXLV.

BY THOMAS BROWN REDIVIVUS,

WHILOME KNT. AND M.D.

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TO THE READER.

IN ancient times it was held as a matter of faith by many, that man's spiritual part did not go at once to its ultimate state of existence, but did undergo a kind of purification, by the passing from one body to another of a better or worse kind; until, being thus corrected of its earthly desires and propensions, it was fitted for its final beatitude. Pythagoras, it was said by some, had good recollection of the time when his soul was far worse bestowed than in that body wherein he preached temperance and virtue so effectually to the citizens of Crotona, as to raise that city at once to greatness, and its people to a merited superiority over their neighbours of Sybaris:—a body kept in such holiness and purity by its beatified inhabitant, that we may well believe it fitted for that resurrection of the just, where "they that do well shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."

Good reader, I will not ask thee to believe that Pythagoras hath revisited earth under my semblance, albeit, my wish to amend the morals, and increase the wise knowledge of my contemporaries, be not less lively than his; but merely to give me so far credit as to believe for the nonce, that the pen which doth now address thee, is that of Thomas Brown, whilome Doctor of Physick; who began his inquiry into vulgar and common errors some two centuries back, and having laughed somewhat at the odd blunders in science made by the men of that age, hath now, in return, somewhat to blush for his own. We are always wont to inquire anxiously what men of other lands have to say concerning us; rightly judging that they who have been brought up in other habits will notice the strangenesses or excellencies of ours, with a sharper observation than that of one born and nurtured in the country; there is, therefore, good reason to think that the opinions of a man of another age stepping onward into this, will not be without their value to such as can forget their own prædjudgments so far as to profit thereby.

Within the last two hundred years the very face of the world is changed; and he who should

rise at once from his grave, passing through no intermediate stage, and look on the nineteenth century with the eyes of the seventeenth, would go near to expire again with amazement at what he saw; and would despair of ever, in the short span of one life, attaining to the knowledge of all the discoveries which have graced these later times. But let the same man go into society, and he will find things far less changed there, than, with such a change in all else, there would be good cause to expect. True it is, that there is more of refinement in expression and manners: but the unthinking many have gained, on the whole, far less from the deep-thinking few, than —taking a theoretic view of the case—might in fair reason have been looked for; and the same error which my Lord Bacon doth so feelingly complain of in his time, remaineth very little corrected in this; namely, a "mistaking or misplacing the last or farthest end of knowledge; for men," saith that wise writer, "have entered into a desire of learning and knowledge, sometimes upon a natural curiosity, and inquisitive appetite; sometimes to entertain their minds with variety and delight; sometimes for ornament and reputation; and sometimes to enable them to victory of wit and contradiction; and

most times for lucre and profession; and seldom to give a true account of their gift of reason, to the benefit and use of men: as if there were sought in knowledge a couch whereupon to rest a searching and restless spirit; or a terrace for a wandering and variable mind to walk up and down with a fair prospect; or a tower of state for a proud mind to raise itself upon; or a fort or commanding ground for strife and contention; or a shop for profit or sale; and not a rich storehouse for the glory of the Creator, and the relief of man's estate."—In brief, learning is sought as the means to an end,—and that end is too usually a worldly one; not for the love of knowledge *per se;* nor for the elevation of the soul, by the giving it strength of pinion to soar above the things of earth: neither if it settle down towards lower regions, doth it come, bird of paradise-like, radiant with the hues of heaven, to make us love the skies it hath left; but it descendeth the rather like the fuliginous particles of the smoke which hath soared upwards for a time, dark and unlovely; with much talk of utility, but little of benevolent usefulness.

Neither do I find that the great advance of science hath done much in the rendering pædagogy more facile and pleasant, either unto the

teacher or the learner: for I perceive youth to be instructed much in the same guise as was the practice of two centuries back; by the influence of fear rather than love. Neither, though somewhat hath been done towards the affording to the poor a slight taste of letters, hath such advance been made towards elevating them to that state of mental enlightenment which is the birthright of every human being, as becometh a great and wealthy state, such as England doth now boast itself to be. Neither do I see that the state of woman-kind is such as becometh a period wherein the empire of mind over matter is so loudly proclaimed. For those disabilities and obstructions of law which were laid upon women in semi-barbarous times, by reason of their lack of physical strength for martial exercises, remain unaltered; and their education is for the most part conducted in such sort, as to debar them from that instruction in liberal science which shall best fit them for the performance of their many and great duties: nay, it is not rare to hear such as have freed themselves from the shackles of idle prejudice so far as to acquire a competent knowledge of science, ancient and modern, rather flouted at, as if they had done some evil thing, than marked as an

ensample for others. And in these things I judge that this age hath not made the advance which it claimeth to have done, in the policies of civil life, and consequently that it walketh lamely as it were, seeing that on the one leg it standeth high, while the other is curtailed of its just proportions.

Nevertheless it promiseth well for this age, that of all the common errors which in former editions of this work the author took occasion to remark on, scarcely any one remaineth unto this present day: and I may surely indulge a hope that if their forefathers suffered themselves to be argued out of their prejudices, and flouted into the receiving of the truth, in so many instances; the existing generation will not be less candid, and take in good part what haply may be more rudely said than is the wont of this age and country. Verily, if Truth have lain in the well ever since the time of Democritus—and, indeed, before his time, for he said she was then so deep that it was past his power to hale her up therefrom,—the wonder is not great if the language she speak be somewhat antiquated. Yet is her voice when she speaketh, so musical to human ears, that the words she useth matter not much:—to my readers, there-

fore, I leave it to consider if in these things which I have noted, it be the voice of TRUTH which speaketh or not: and if indeed they should find it to be so, then haply they may profit thereby, to the putting away of prejudice so far, that, as this my record of common errors is of so much less bulk than the last, so in the next age there shall be none occasion to make any farther edition thereof.

OF THE CAUSES OF COMMON ERRORS.

To him who proposeth unto himself the correction of some of the errors which he continually findeth current in the world, an inquiry into their causes is a natural beginning: and doubtless, as is set forth in the first editions of this work, the natural infirmity and deceptibility of human nature have their share therein: but less so in the present perihelion of science, than formerly. For I do now perceive, when I look deeply into the causes aforesaid, that much of the error now current is founded on sayings delivered commonly in society, which yet any one of that society could well correct by his own proper knowledge, were he so minded. I hold its prevalence, therefore, to be rather the consequence of an indolence that *will not*, than of an ignorance or dullness that *cannot* examine the grounds thereof.

When the patterns of weights and measures were laid up in the sanctuary of the Hebrews,

for the prevention of mistake or fraud, we find very soon that the cubit and the ephah grew to be so much shorter and less in the hands of the people, that the difference came at last to be acknowledged and registered:—so unwilling are men to keep up to the full measure ordained by God: and thus it is that we too, having our measure of life laid up unchangeably in the gospel, have come to have a worldly measure also, which falleth far short of it: and this is allowed and acknowledged—but hath God allowed it?—and when we go from this world with some of these current errors in our mouths, and measure ourselves thereby, are we certain that the measure of the sanctuary will not be brought forth to falsify our bad calculation? nay, are we not sure that *it will?*

Methinks, therefore, as errors of science are every day fading away before the greater light which seemeth to be leading us on, like the lengthening days of May, to the summer-tide of knowledge, where there shall be no real darkness;—it is of more import to expose the falsity of some of these current sayings, and to bring forth into common use the cubit and ephah of the sanctuary, seeing that sooner or later we *must* measure our course of life there-

by;—than to combat many of those mere popular errors in science which are only dragging on a lingering existence, and which will expire altogether in a very few years without any aid of mine. And if by such an examination of common sayings that have thus far passed unquestioned, I may lead men generally to look a little more narrowly into their opinions on such matters; and cultivate in them more rational and logical modes of thinking, so that fallacies shall not, as heretofore, pass undetected through an indolent fear of the trouble of inquiry,—I shall hold myself to have done good service to the world, and not be without hope that I may thereby have rendered my own last account somewhat more satisfactory.

As for other errors of less concernment, some have arisen from witty sayings, which have come to be repeated for the neatness of the expression, till they acquired the weight of a maxim: and some have had their birth in too much learning; inasmuch as not a few writers have treated their own language contemptuously, as deficient in grammatical forms; and so in studying to write Latin they have forgotten how to write English; and thus have fallen themselves, and led others into notable

errors of phrase; some of which out of love to my native tongue, which I hold to be rich in power of expression, when spoken in its purity, I shall take occasion to notice; and doubtless, if we look narrowly into men's notions, Ignorance also will be found to have a large family of errors that call him father: but as I have before said, they are a sickly brood, not likely in most instances to reach maturity; for the which cause I am the less careful about them.

OF VULGAR ERRORS IN THE WAY OF COMMON SAYINGS.

"A young man must sow his wild oats."

A BAD and profitless crop at any time, but worst when sown in a virgin soil; for then do they grow more rampant, so as utterly to choke all the seed planted by the care of the Divine Husbandman. But to speak of this notion without a figure,—for methinks it is on account of its foulness that it hath been so veiled;—and sometimes it is better to show bad things in all their ugliness, that men may eschew them,—what doth this phrase of "sowing wild oats" signify? Doth it not amount to this,—that man, having lost his primæval innocence, shall take good care that he never regain it? That he doth well, if, after having given all the cream and richness of his life to Belial, he shall haply carry the sour skim milk thereof to God?

I remember once hearing one who had thus

done, and was now grown old, lament himself, in that death was drawing nigh; he being then suffering with gout, and other infirmities of age, come upon him all the sooner for the intemperance of his youth: to the which it was answered, that death was a happy deliverance from the pains of protracted age, and that even had his life formerly been such as he would now wish had been otherwise, yet that for many years he had had no cause for uneasiness on this head; seeing that he had doubtless repented of the past. Methinks I see his countenance now, and hear the tone of his voice when he replied to those well intended consolations—"Yes, I forsook my sins when my sins forsook me,"—and he paused as if fearing to strengthen by utterance the thought which oppressed him; but after a moment he added, "how can I tell that *such* repentance is of any avail?" and then, though his age and health required rest, he plunged again into the dissipation of company, in order to get rid of uneasy remembrance, and it may be, of still more uneasy anticipations; and so he died—he had "sown his wild oats," and gathered the fruit.

But say some, and they are women whom I hear say so,—the more the shame and the pity

when they who should be the salt of the earth, have so far lost their savour as to allow it to putrefy,—"Men must know the world, and they will avoid vice the better for having tasted, and found what it is like." "Good madam," I would answer to such an one, "there have been persons who have swallowed arsenic, and recovered; but did any one ever think that it was needful in order to the avoiding of that poison in future, to try how much danger and suffering attended the taking it? Or did he ever find his constitution amended thereby?" Man's bodily frame is too complex in its mechanism to be disordered with impunity; and it may well be a question with an anatomist, who knoweth the functions of the brain, and the extreme delicacy of that organ, whether it ever entirely recovereth from the effects of this devilish apprenticeship. Neither doth the youth thereby gain knowledge of the world; for, thanks be to heaven! bad as it is, it is not all bad; and I think the larger portion of mankind will be found to have enough of good in their composition to pose a man shrewdly, who hath known only evil. A person may be innocent without being ignorant: he may know, alack!—who can move in the world and not know it?—that there is much of vice,

and many evil men and evil things around him: but he may at the same time dislike and avoid such society. It hath been said by One whom none will gainsay, that "no man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other." Men do not become vicious till they have learned to like vice; for if they did not, it is too ugly in its features and frightful in its consequences to be entertained for a moment. What security is there then, that after having cherished this depraved appetite for a season, the order of nature will be reversed in this one instance, and that habit will not in this, as in other the like cases, strengthen the propension to what hath been oft times done, till it becometh more and more difficult to avoid the doing it again?

I should like to ask such as hold this pseudo-knowledge of the world so especially needful to man's well-being, what place in that future world which all profess to believe in, this science is likely to fit them for? Sure I am that if our conversation be destined to be with just men made perfect, as in Sacred Writ we are told it shall be, we shall find this kind of knowledge strangely out of place in such intercourse; and

I question much if such a training would not go far to exclude a man from all good society there; as being too vulgar and ill mannered a soul to be admitted among such as had been accustomed to keep good company. It is a convenient doctrine that men hold, that the happiness or infelicity of the next world is an arbitrary reward or punishment, which can be bestowed at the will of the Judge; whose compassion being finally moved by a few tears and professions of sorrow, he will thereupon remit the one, and bestow the other. But what if we should find that when the earthly mould is broken, the soul remaineth with all the ugly features there given it, settled and fixed for ever? Will not this so-called knowledge of the world then remain upon its front, as an unseemly wart or wen, quite foreign from its true beauty?

Methinks the most careless libertine would shrink from the thought of remembering to all eternity,—even if he had no other penalty to fear,—all the scenes of gross vice he had witnessed, all the innocence he had undermined; all the misery he had been the cause of: yet if we believe in a future judgment, we cannot suppose that the remembrance of our past deeds will ever be wiped out, for we are to receive

"the reward of *the deeds done in the body*, whether they be good or whether they be evil."

But excesses of this kind are a mark of spirit, it is said; and some young damsel will be found to remark that she doth "not like an effeminate man." Fair lady, did you ever hear of one Jesus of Nazareth? Did any of the most famed heroes of ancient or modern times ever meet torture and death more calmly than he did? or ever bear himself before prejudiced and unjust judges with more noble self-possession and dignity? Did HE want spirit? HE, from whom the scourge of the Roman drew not a sigh; HE who conversed calmly on the cross! was HE effeminate? His company was sought by the wealthy and great, the poor carpenter's son! could HE be wanting in elegance of manners? Yet how patient, how gentle, how kind was he in all the relations of life! how pure, how holy was his conduct! He, the young, the courted guest; the idol of the people, who might have set the crown upon his brow at any moment of his career, if he would but have given the word! If you have ever heard of this person, look once more at your man of spirit; place the two characters side by side—but I will not insult your judgment by drawing the parallel; suffice

it that Jesus of Nazareth though "tempted in all things like as we are;" young, followed, fond of female society, and joining in all the pleasures of social life,—*sowed no wild oats.*

"*A good fellow, nobody's enemy but his own.*"

It hath oft times been matter of wonderment to me how many phrases do come to be received as current coin in the world, which for certain were never lawfully stamped in the mint of either religion or reason: and among these brass shillings of society, I know none that better deserveth to be nailed to the counter than the one above placed; for many an idle young man hath, before now, found it the last in his pocket, and haply hath exchanged it for a pistol bullet, thinking himself a gainer by the bargain.

If man grew to a rock like a limpet, then might he haply be his own enemy without any great harm to his neighbours; but he who liveth in society, and faileth to perform his part aright in the station assigned to him, doth all that in him lieth to destroy the body politic. He who is delivered over to vice and drunkenness—for such, being interpreted, is the meaning of a good fellow who is only *his own enemy*,—

setteth a bad example to his dependents; squandereth his fortune on unworthy objects, to the neglect of all that he might and ought to have done towards the relief and advance of the deserving; plungeth his family into difficulties; grieveth, shameth, and perhaps starveth them; ruineth his health, so as to make himself a burthen to those about him; and finally, after having been a bad citizen, a bad master, a bad husband, a bad father, sinketh into the grave with a soul so irrecoverably poisoned by habits of sensuality and gross earthliness, that it would seem rather fit to rot with its putrefying companion, than to enter into any region of spiritualized existence. And this man who hath fulfilled no one duty, but on the contrary hath spread around him a dank atmosphere of sin, is called "a good fellow," merely because he hath done all this with an air of reckless gaiety, which showed an utter absence of any feeling for the beings he was rendering miserable! Verily the world's measure is wofully short of the standard cubit and ephah of the sanctuary.

"*We must do as others do.*"

So doubtless said the people before the flood, and the natives of Sodoma: and from their time

downwards, half the evils of the world may be tracked to that gregarious propension in man, which maketh him, like a silly sheep, leap because others leap, notwithstanding that he himself seeth no just cause for any such feat of agility. But "what will people say?" exclaim the weakly minded. "Good Sir, or Madam," I would answer, "people" think far less of your concerns than you imagine; or even if they do bestow a passing notice on them, there is so little of unanimity among men, unless where the great instincts of our nature are concerned, that oft, yea, most times, what one party blameth, another will praise. True it is, that it concerneth all who would do good in their generation, so far to make this inquiry as that they may not *needlessly* give offence, even to the conceits and prejudices of their neighbours; because so to do doth not only militate against the rule of Christian charity, but, inasmuch as it may cause their "good to be evil spoken of," doth notably diminish their usefulness; but to let this consideration of what others will say concerning us, be, as it often is, a worm at the root of good intention, a barrier across the path which leadeth to our goal,—what is it but to give idle talk more importance than conscience,

and to set the fear of man to weigh against the fear of God, in the balances of this world.

In the greatest matter that ever was enacted on this earth, down to the most insignificant occurrence of ordinary life, this unhappy question hath forced its way, to the manifest moral perturbation, if not to the actual overthrowing of the inquirer. It was an idle and common occurrence that the daughter of Herodias should dance; and it was a no less common occurrence that a king, being drunk, should make a promise whereof he foresaw not the consequences; but it was the fear of what the lords who sate at meat with him *would say*, that made Herod embrue his hands in the blood of an innocent man, even when his better nature started back from the commission of so heinous a crime. And thus much for a trivial occurrence where the dread of the idle judgment of man, led to bitter consequences and deep guilt; but there was another and a greater occasion where this concernment for the ill digested opinion and talk of others, played a yet more notable and important part; for what was it that led Pontius Pilate to condemn HIM whom he in his heart believed to be guiltless, but the fear that "people would say" he was disloyal unto Cæsar? And to pass

from the greater unto the less, how long ago would that evil custom bequeathed to us by our barbarous ancestors, have been rusting, with their armour, in forgetfulness, did not the cowardly fear of what strangers would say, outbalance the laws of God, and the best affections of our nature; and arm the hand of the friend against the friend, when both, at heart, shrunk from the appeal to this *ultima ratio* of unreasoning men.

But leaving this part of the matter, wherein this evil carefulness for the sweetness of the world's breath leadeth to crimes of a deep dye; let us farther consider the ill influence which this maxim that 'we must do as others do,' exerciseth on the common affairs of life. A man, for instance, when he summeth up his reckonings, and asketh himself how his business is thriving, may perceive that he is not so well to do in the world as he was; that the sources of his gains, without any fault of his, perhaps, are lessening; and that there is no reasonable hope that they will again prosper him as they have heretofore done. What doth he then?—doth he content himself to spend less when he gaineth less?—to proportion the sum of his outgoings to that of his diminished incomings? No, 'what

would people say? he must do as others of a like rank do.'—What wonder if ruin follow?... Again;—a man of small fortune hath acquaintances whose larger means may justify their indulging in many of the gauds and ornaments of life;—the wife of such an one hath jewels;—another keepeth a table, not for hospitality alone, but show:—our poorer man hath hitherto been thrifty and careful, but an idle question maketh its way into his mind of 'what will people think' of his frugal though hospitable board, his wife's lack of bravery in her attire,—his own plain mode of life?—Where this notion hath once settled on the mind, it is like rust, corroding and cankering whatever it touches; it eateth away his peace, and paltry as it is, hath power to destroy the comfort of a life! To be rid of it he spendeth what he getteth not, vieth with his neighbour for a year or two, and becometh a beggar for the remainder of his days.

Nor is this over carefulness for the world's opinion less an enemy to kindness than to thrift: many a deed whose object is to raïse the fallen, to cheer those on whom the hard hearted have frowned, to speak peace to a troubled soul, or other such christian act, hath been nipped in the bud by its selfish, blighting breath; and,

like other tyrannical rulers, it is not satisfied with the homage of our actions only; it must have that of our speech; and leadeth to injustice in more, and more diverse ways, than I can here specify. The experience of every one will, I doubt not, furnish him with many instances hereof in lesser matters; as where persons really not ill natured have joined with the company in slanderous or unedifying talk, lest it should be thought strange, should they not do as others did; and so on in other things of a like kind. It would be better both for ourselves and others, methinks, if instead of asking "what will *people* say?" we were to ask "what will *conscience* say?" and instead of measuring our doings by those of others, were to seek to square them by the standard of the sanctuary. We might haply save ourselves from many crimes, and some follies, by so doing.

"*He that spareth the rod spoileth the child*" Is a sentence which, though it be that of the wise Solomon, is often in the mouth of many a man that hath not Solomon's wisdom, or he would have known that if the advance of knowledge be not of force to enable us to teach the young to love goodness, rather than to fear punishment,

we might, for all the profit we have gained from learning, as well have remained ignorant. Truly, that is but a slavish service which is paid merely through fear of the rod; and as good Doctor Martin Luther hath well said, "How shall our works please God when they come from a disinclined and unwilling heart? For to fulfil the law is to do the works of the law with inclination and affection; and freely, without the constraint of the law, to lead a godly and pious life, as if there were no fear of punishment."—I trow that none of those who are so free to quote this sentence of king Solomon, would be satisfied with all Solomon's knowledge, even though he spake of all plants, from the cedar of Lebanon, to the hyssop that hangeth on the wall: I hold it therefore among vulgar errors to suppose that we are to make no advance in the matter of education, when there is no other point wherein we would be satisfied to live and do as king Solomon did. And hereout arises much bitter fruit; for while parents are pleasing themselves with the thought that all offence is to be whipped out of the child by future pædagogues, and all learning whipped in; those years wherein the tender shoot can best be trained, are wholly neglected; and the child who haply,

in after years, may be called on to harangue in the pulpit or the senate ;—to guide a family, or it may be, the state ;—is left in the nursery to learn to speak English from rude unlettered persons, who cannot utter three words without transgressing against the commonest rules of grammar;—and to gain the first notions of logical reasoning from those whose arguments reach no farther than, "it is because it is;"—and the first ideas of duty from such as most frequently hold the bearing a fair face towards the head of the family, to be the only point to be aimed at; and whose squabbles and ill language, unconstrained before the baby, give its young mind the first impressions. One who spake as never man spake, said, "Ye do not gather grapes from thorns, nor figs from thistles"—yet what but thorns and thistles are likely to spring up in a nursery where the mind is left, as was quaintly said by some one, "a sheet of white paper for the devil to write upon"—whereas if parents would do their duty, and by keeping their children with them under such gentle restraint as parental affection would dictate, check in the bud the first indications of evil, the young memory would be stored with knowledge picked up from conversation, without the weariness of

learning; the language would be polished, the manners refined; and the child, instead of coming down once a day to destroy everything he can lay his hands on; to howl if in an ill, or to bellow if in a good humour; would be a cheerful and pleasant companion; knowing when and where to indulge in his recreations, and when to withdraw into discreet silence, should graver matters require it. Nor is this any fine drawn picture of the imagination; for in this my revisitation of the world, it hath been my happiness to see some such families, and the felicity enjoyed by all the members, old and young, hath shown that knowledge, if rightly employed, can give us a better system than that of a semi-barbarous age, now passed away along with that law of Moses, which, though good for the times, was pronounced by the greatest of all authorities to have been given to the Israelites "because of the hardness of their hearts."

"*Children should not ask questions.*"

I REMEMBER once hearing of the fellow of a college at Oxford, whose training had been in the days when university men could go deeper into a bottle of port than a problem of Euclid, who exclaimed against the evil practice of

allowing children to be inquisitive. "A child cometh up to one, now-a-days," cried this remnant of the olden times, "and asketh me the diameter of the moon: now I don't know what is the diameter of the moon, and I don't like to be asked such questions." This old gentleman was at least honest, and confessed without reserve the real cause of his objection. If others would be as honest, I have little doubt that we should find the very strenuous objections made to children's inquisitiveness, and eagerness to search into *omne scibile*, to have its origin in a like cause; their elders *do not know the diameter of the moon*. But meseemeth that even though the former generation should have been ignorant of many useful things, they have not any right thereby engendered, to choke the spring of knowledge for the young, even though their searching inquiries should disclose how little the old had drunk of it: and he must have been a bad parent who hath gained so little of the affection of his child by his kindliness, as to have any fear that he shall attract his mockery by his want of erudition. A better answer would such a parent give, even in that case, were he to say, "My child, when I was young, no one would answer my questions; and there-

fore, to my regret, I remained ignorant of much that I wished to know: but, my dear child, I will not so deal with thee; and, therefore, though to this question of thine I am unable to give an answer of mine own science, yet as happily we have in this age books that will tell us this and much more, we will together seek this out, and then we shall both be the wiser." Nor need any one fear the being lightly esteemed by his children for this plain spoken sincerity: for the lesson thus learned is made pleasant by the very circumstance that it is participated in by the parent, not dogmatically enforced; and the child will rather wish that much of his learning should be thus acquired, than that he should run the hazard of being rebuked for slowness of apprehension, by one who already knoweth what he hath to explain.

Moreover this inquiring spirit which men are at such pains to repress, would seem to have been bestowed by God for the express purpose of farthering man's knowledge: for the child asketh of his parent the cause of this and that, and if he be answered well and freely, he will have learned, long ere he come to man's estate, the current state of science; and having thus a foundation whereon to advance his building,

he may chance thereupon to place a superstructure which may be both useful and fair: but if this first instinct be checked, and the child be compelled to look on what he understandeth not, and yet hold no question thereupon; he will soon learn to glance carelessly over the things around him, so that "seeing he shall not see, and hearing he shall not understand;" and when he cometh to years, miscalled of discretion, it will be well for him if they afford enough of it to enable him then to hold his tongue.

During the first years of childhood the brain is tender, and impatient of much hard application; and, therefore, if heavy lessons be set him to learn, a child soon becometh unhealthy, and finally lumpish and incapable: but it is at this period of the tenderness of the brain, that he is most prone to ask questions as to all that he seeth or heareth, as though he were exercising that organ in the same way that he doth his limbs, by many irregular jumps and movements which favour its healthy development. If these movements be restrained, the body becometh deformed; nor doth the brain suffer less by the repressing this its natural exercise; becoming ever after inert, and unfit for all those higher operations of intellect, which require prompti-

tude of thought: so that not only is much precious time lost afterwards, in gaining that rudimentary knowledge which might have been acquired *vivâ voce* without fatigue, but the organ itself is, by its long inactivity, rendered less fit for its work. Two heavy evils whereof the world hath daily experience in the bad ordering of affairs, by reason of the lack of mental expertness in those who have been entrusted with the overseeing thereof: and thus a large quota of mischief arises from the senseless vanity of parents, who are ashamed to acknowledge their lack of science; or their inconsiderateness in giving forth commands which they cannot support by any just and convincing reason, for which cause they dread the word, "why?"—or their indolence in not choosing to seek, either in their own minds or elsewhere, the means of satisfying the first longings of the child after true knowledge and justice.

"*A boy should be manly.*"

And what doth this phrase of "being manly," intend to express? We can understand what was meant by the αρετη of the Greeks, and the *virtus* of the Romans in heathen times; for in states when war was the only honourable em-

ployment,—plunder the only riches,—and the choice was only between slavery, literal back-breaking slavery, and conquest; it is easy to conceive that personal courage was reckoned *the* virtue κὰτ' ἐξοχην. But the manliness of a Christian Englishman is a much more puzzling thing. "I like my boys to be manly," saith a father; and thereupon he setteth his children to fight one another or their companions; not in defence of the oppressed; not in resistance to wrong doing which they can no otherwise avoid; but upon some quarrel, having for its origin either ill humour, or pride, or ill passion of some kind. It is manly then, in the eyes of this father that his son should do, what as a Christian, he is forbidden to do! Yet this same parent would shudder at the thought of allowing him to bow to the image of a Hindoo deity, or of a Romish saint even. But wherein lies the difference? Are we empowered to be thus curiously nice in the picking out which of God's positive laws we will obey, as though we gained an immunity for the neglect of the rest, by the observance of one or two? If we are to call it manly to cast off the very sign and badge of our Christian profession, "hereby shall men know that ye are my disciples, that ye love one an-

other,"—we need make small scruple to imitate the example of the Dutch traders to Japan in former times, and deny our faith when interest prompteth us so to do. To my mind, the sin is not greater in the one case, than the other: for to be manly according to this devilish interpretation of the word, is—not to be a Christian man. If such is to be his future training, wherefore is a child mocked by being signed "with the sign of the cross, in token that hereafter he shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified" . . . and shall "continue his faithful soldier and servant unto his life's end?" Verily the father who meaneth to have *such* a manly son, might spare himself the trouble of carrying him to the font.

"*A man is not responsible for his belief.*"

Meseemeth that there is, in the use made of this saying, some deal of error, sheltering itself under an undeniable truth; for though man's mind be so framed that he cannot believe without proof, and therefore he remaineth free from blame, if, from poverty, he be misinstructed, and thereby his faith be starved; or if, from ill instruction he be supplied with prejudice only, and thereby his faith be poisoned; or if, from

being born in a pagan country, the light hath not arrived at him, and therefore the seed of faith hath not been able to germinate; yet if the lack of belief in revelation be the consequence of inattention, which doth not seek for proof, or of indolence, which will not be at the pains to cultivate the intellect enough to be able to comprehend the proof when given,—then is such a man assuredly responsible for his errors. Yea, methinks he incurreth the blame of the servant in the parable who having a talent given him, improved it not, but brought it back, not even naked as he received it, but wrapped in a napkin of fleshly desires and conceits, which he had bestowed on it whilst it was in his keeping, and complained of his Lord as a hard master, because having bestowed on his idle servant the means of bettering his estate, he expected him to have made some use thereof.

It is a strange notion of many well intentioned persons, that religious knowledge doth differ from all other; and that it cometh by prayer only, and not by study. How shall the man pray who knoweth not, or believeth not the necessity for prayer? But when study hath roused his attention, then there will be some likelihood that, like the treasurer of Queen

Candace, he will find out his own ignorance, and seek for some man to teach him; yea, look on high for the instruction of that Divine Teacher, who is ever ready to make them wise, who seek for true wisdom.

It hath never been my luck to know one whose faith bore right good fruit, who had not reasoned thereupon; for as St. Clement of Alexandria doth truly say, "faith is knowledge, and knowledge is faith; God having so constituted them that they mutually lean on each other, by turns leading and being led." Nor for this kind of reasoning, is it needful to have been trained in the schools of learning; for as the ancient fathers of the church do well observe, man's mind is naturally λογικος, i.e. rational or logical; and therefore many a peasant who never heard of Aristoteles, doth, notwithstanding, come to a good logical conclusion by dint of his own deep thinking, aided by experience in life, and right intentions. Let a man therefore well judge himself, ere he assert, as a reason for his incredulity, that we are not responsible for our belief: for if he have not exerted all the powers of his mind upon the question, aided by all the cultivation which his station of life hath put within his reach, he may find when

it is too late for his comfort, that he hath cast away that faith which is knowledge, and knowledge which is faith, to his own great detriment in all the circumstances of life. For man, as he is not self-existent, so neither is he self-supported. He who would find diamonds must well know and believe that there is a gem within that rough outside, or he will pass it by unheeded: and he who would truly prosper in this present world, must sufficiently believe that there is good meant to him in the seeming roughnesses of life, to induce him to seek for it with some pains, otherwise he will sit down desponding, and only see black stones where others are gathering gems. Man is not yet what he shall be, and in this his infancy, if he be not content to lean on the hand which God holdeth out to him, he will stumble amid the rough ground which he hath to pass over ere he reach his resting place.

"*Women have no concern with politics,*"

Is a saying which goeth current with the many, who indeed are not always the wise, as an incontrovertible truth; yet there is no opinion which I have heard in these days, that, to my mind, more savoureth of error. Politics, as I think, is a word applied to the science of government;

but in its larger signification it extendeth itself to the knowledge of the relations between different states, and the influence which the circumstances of one may have upon the well-being of another, as well as to the acquaintance with the civil polity of our own. Now as the prosperity of a nation consisteth in the due attention on the part of its governors to all these matters; and as the well-being of every citizen is deeply involved in the prosperity of the land wherein he abideth; so hath it always been held that in all free states the rulers should be under a certain control of public opinion; this opinion being indeed no other than the collective expression of the notions held by the majority of individual citizens. Now as the essence of good government is that it shall protect the weak against the strong, so methinks, women, instead of having no concern with politics, have necessarily a peculiar interest therein; seeing that their small physical strength must always render them the most liable to oppression, either amid civil broils, or foreign invasion: for the which cause Plato, in his book of laws, would have the women of his imaginary state so trained to active, and even martial exercises, that should the defenders of a city be slain or absent, the

women thereof should be able in some sort to protect themselves against the violence of their enemies.

But I am inclined to think that the untrue conclusion expressed in the above stated saying is drawn from premises no less false; for I hear it by many asserted that the female is born with a weaker intellect than the male. Now, theoretically, this should be false: for all through animal nature, that faculty whatever it be, which is peculiar to the species, is possessed in an equal degree by both the sexes. Thus, the scent of the hound, or the wiliness of the fox, or the imitativeness of the monkey, differeth not one whit, whether the animal be male or female; and as reason, and a sharp discernment of the relations of things, is the peculiar faculty of man, so we might, by analogy, conclude that the female of the species possessed it in an equal degree: but we find a yet stronger argument in the anatomy of the brain, which is the organ whereby rational conclusions are shaped and elaborated: for here is no defect, but the contrary; for in regard to the proportion that the brain beareth to the body, the female is no ways behind the male, but rather exceedeth in the quantity thereof; neither is there any organ or

part wanting therein, of those which the male brain doth possess. With regard to the use made thereof, I have already remarked that the education afforded to the female sex is not generally of such a nature as, considering the advance of science, was to be expected; and yet despite of these disadvantages, there have been examples enough in almost every science, and especially in that most uninviting and severe one of the mathematics, to show that there is no lack of power, were it duly cultivated. Therefore I hold that this opinion of the intellectual incapacity of the female sex, must be ranked with those presumed truths which it is to be hoped that the enlightenment of the age will soon place among declared errors; and that citizens of the state who have property and lives to lose, will no longer be told that they have no concern in the policy which may bring both into jeopardy. I have heard much of "feminine accomplishments," and "feminine virtues," as if the two sexes were of entirely different species, and had no concerns in common; but I must freely confess, however strange it may seem to those who are freer in the use of this phrase than they are haply clear in the understanding of it, that I never yet could discover

which they be. For should we term painting or music such accomplishments, there are abundance of the male sex as well as the female, who excel in them, and therefore they do not of nature belong to either; and for the so-called "feminine virtues," if any will tell me of a virtue which becometh a woman, that doth not also become a man, I shall be wiser thereafter than the gospel hath made me.

"*Marriage is a lottery,*"

To them that choose to make it so; for if a farmer going to a market where samples of corn or beeves are exposed for sale, shall determinately shut his eyes, and purchase the one upon which some chance shall cause him to lay his hand, I know no law to prevent it; save that, if it were often done, his next of kin might perchance sue for a writ *de lunatico inquirendo:* but since marriage is, for the most part done once for all, the individual can, if he will, make this kind of lottery of it: for however great the folly, it would want that succession of proof which would enable the chancellor to allow relations to interfere in the way of restraint. How the saying arose, I am at a loss to tell, unless it were in those times when parents selected hus-

bands for their daughters, and wives for their sons, in their nonage: it might then be held a lottery what the infant thus betrothed might prove to be when grown to maturity: and perchance, as sayings last long after the circumstances which gave rise to them, this, which was a true condemnation of a bad practice in its first use hath now grown into a proverbial justification of a practice equally bad: for to take him or her who is to be the companion of our future life, by mere chance, and without enquiry, bringeth us back to those times whereof this saying was the reproach. Yet we do not see that a servant who may at any time be discharged at a month's notice, and trouble us no farther, is received into our houses without a strict enquiry into former conduct, ability, and disposition: a strange instance of prudence in the lesser matter, coupled with carelessness in the greater. And though something might be said in excuse on the part of the man, inasmuch as the law of this realm of England, as I have before noted, giveth him a kind of mastership over his wife which savoureth of that law of the strongest which barbarous times do affect, and thus he may think her temper and conduct of the less import,—what is the woman thinking

of when she taketh to herself a master whose character she hath not sought to ascertain! Is she ignorant that, by the sanction of this same law of England, he can imprison her in any room in his house, so long as he himself is an inhabitant thereof;—that he may strike her, so long as he inflicteth no severe bodily injury; that he may leave her and live in adultery with another; but if, when thus abandoned, she can earn money to support herself, or come into an inheritance from her family, he can claim and take it from her, for the use of himself and his paramour? Knoweth she not this? and if she do, what term shall we find for the folly of her who maketh it a lottery whether all this may not be her lot?—I speak not here of the law which surely hath strange and ugly features for an age that boasteth itself as a polished one; but I do say that whilst the law is such as to make marriage a legal slavery for the woman, lightened only of its burthensomeness by the temper and just feelings of a good man, who would abhor to use the wicked privileges thus allowed him; it behoveth her, ere she so bind herself, to know thoroughly the habits and principles of him whom she trusteth with such large authority over her. A christian in principle

would not avail himself of such a law; as indeed he blusheth now to see it recorded among those of his country: but the world's code of honour affordeth no security against it, as daily experience too sadly sheweth. Let every woman then beware, and take heed that her future peace be not thrown away in this "lottery:" and let every man beware also, lest with all these privileges of law, he should find that a bad woman can make them all of none avail, and bring him to confess that he had better have looked ere he made that headlong leap, led thereto by a fair face hiding an evil heart.

"*You cannot put an old head on young shoulders.*"

If in the saying which standeth above, it be only intended to be affirmed that we cannot expect to gather the blossom and pluck the fruit of the same tree at the same season, or in other phrase, to find in a youth who hath not yet numbered twenty years, the experience of one of twice or thrice that age; it may be reckoned among those self evident propositions which persons might well spare themselves the trouble of putting forth or iterating, and can as little be gainsaid, as that grey hairs are more to be

looked for on the head of an old man than on that of a youth. But if more than this be supposed to be contained by implication in the saw I have mentioned, methinks it is not only dubious, but capable of large error. The wise Lord Bacon hath said that "a man that is young in years may be old in hours, if he have lost no time; but," he addeth,—alack that the world should have profited so little by his wisdom!—"that happeneth rarely." Now that it is good that the young should be merry and happy, it must be a sorry cynic that would deny; but that mirth and joy may be all the better for having wisdom, goodness, and learning in their company must be admitted by all: and if the training of the young be such as shall lead them to seek and delight in such things, they will indeed be less giddy and perturbed on all occasions, but not a whit the less happy.

Should it be a question how this saying hath become current in the world, it may be considered that it is a very facile and convenient mode of shifting the burthen from our own shoulders to those of dame Nature: yet is she not blameworthy in this matter, for she hath given abundance of brains to the young, and if they be not taught to use them, it is not her fault but the parent's.

We have examples enough of the early putting forth of such buds of wisdom as have matured into goodly fruit, to prove that such things may be: but if ye shall be at the pains of inquiring whether the present fashion of indoctrinating youth, as well boys as maidens, be of a kind to supply by thought and cogitation what is lacking in experience, ye shall surely find that there is some main error at the bottom of the present plan of education; since the best fruits of it are wanting. Yet is there not any lack of power in the brain, for ye shall oft times see a lad of sixteen or seventeen years of age, possessed of many acquirements not to be gained without hard study. Such an one will be well grounded in Greek, Latin, and the mathematics, and these are not to be learned without some thought; but this glorious faculty whereby man doth so rise above the brutes, is for the most part left uncultivated, or only called into action by the dread of the pædagogue:—the memory indeed is disciplined, but the reason left untrained. For proof hereof ye have but to look at the course of a young man's life: at school first, then at the university, and lastly under the especial training for his profession or trade be it what it may, wherein the fashion of empirical

teaching doth so generally prevail, that ye shall rarely find a tutor or instructor of youth any where, who is either able or willing to answer those questions on the foundations of science, of law, or of commerce, which suggest themselves to an ingenuous mind; and thus all teaching resolveth itself into a set of dogmatic rules for particular cases, rather than broad principles, whereon the tyro may ground general conclusions, such as may guide him on other occasions than the one in question.

And if this be true as regardeth youth of the male sex, how much more biting an evil is it as regardeth the female: for the teachers themselves, being for the most part ill and insufficiently instructed, dare not step beyond the mere setting of lessons to be learned by rote; from which so little of wisdom is to be gained, that ye shall frequently find the old shoulders surmounted by a very childish head, as far as regardeth the brain furniture, however it may externally bear the signs of age.

Many are the complaints made in this age, of the neglect of education; and truly I do hold them to be well founded: but I do also note that what is called education, though it may raise the recipients thereof above the depths of

brutal ignorance, is far off from a training to wisdom. A young maiden is kept in the nursery and the school room, like a ship on the stocks, whilst she is furnished with abundance of showy accomplishments, and is launched like the ship, looking taut and trim, but empty of everything that can make her useful. What captain would undertake to go a voyage in such a vessel? He would naturally say, I must have store of all that is needful to meet the storms of winter, the attacks of enemies, the wear and tear of the voyage. And wherein is the maiden better qualified to meet the rubs and storms of life? What store of knowledge hath she to enable her to meet the wintry period of life cheerfully? What mental firmness to withstand the enemies of her virtue? What good common sense to meet the wear and tear of every day life?—She is a doll to be played with, not a companion to cheer, or a wise friend to guide, or to help in the buffetings of ill fortune. Yet if we will mark those persons of both sexes, who,—by circumstances, which though deemed untoward, were God's schooling for the mind,—have had all the powers of thinking and acting early called forth; we shall see that they have proved themselves equal to the demands made

upon them. Now if wise and gentle training were during early life made to perform the part of hard necessity, the same good effect might be secured without the pain and harass; and children might be accustomed to employ their reason on the ordinary business of life, without foregoing any branch of useful learning, or losing any of those refreshments and delights which the great Creator hath provided for the young and innocent. For a better system of teaching, where the reason rather than the memory should be taxed, would make learning less the drudgery of one who fears punishment, than the pleasant occupation of the intellect; and thus would it both occupy less time, and be far more useful for the affairs of life; where we never find that set rules will serve us for every variety of circumstance, but where general principles are needed for guidance on fresh occasions and must thus be applied *pro re nata*, as we are wont to say in our prescriptions. Were such training given to the young, I think the saying I have commented on, would not be so general: for it would then be seen that a wise and experienced head *can* be placed on young shoulders; and that nothing is needful thereto

but the careful and early use of the faculties God hath given.

"*Ne sutor ultra crepidam.*"*

Albeit this saying be ancient, it is not without its harm in modern times also; for it is a cruelty to attempt to bound the expansion of the human intellect because the law of nature may have required the labour of the hand to minister to the maintenance of the body: and to scoff at the endeavour to rise above the mire of daily toil, and soar in the empyrean of spiritual enjoyments for a short space, showeth a small share of the brotherly feeling which should exist among the followers of Christ. Moreover the maxim, if attended to, would be hurtful to mankind generally;—for many of our most useful discoveries, and much that doth most delectate our imagination, have been the work of persons who would never have benefited or delighted their contemporaries and posterity, had they thereby been deterred from engaging in pursuits very little germane to their worldly calling. The lawyer would never have written poetry, nor the priest have invented machinery: yea, Friar Bacon

* Let not the shoemaker go beyond his last.

would have left us without gunpowder, which albeit it hath its evils, yet hath served man much more effectually than it hath injured: and even in times nearer to the period wherein that saying had its rise, Cicero himself would never have left us that rich legacy of pure morality and wise philosophy, had he confined himself to *his* last; videlicet, the labours of the forum; nor earlier yet, would Socrates have become the listener to Anaxagoras while he was yet engaged with the chisel in his father's shop, had he had any such notion. Nay, he who first spake it showed more of the spite of mortified vanity, than the sense of a wise man; for though a shoemaker's business be with the foot only, yet if he had made any use of his eyes he could not fail to be cognizant of other parts of the body also, in a country and time when men were so little chary of their skin, that there was scarcely any part thereof that did not daily see the sun. It hardly deserveth therefore the long currency it hath had.

"*A little learning is a dangerous thing.*"

I KNOW not whether, when Mr. Pope wrote these words, he had himself felt that his small knowledge of Greek had betrayed him into some

inaccuracies in his translation of Homer, and therefore he was in anger with his own "little learning;" but this I do know, that the lines have been quoted largely to countenance an indolence that human nature is already too prone to, without the further aid of a popular poet. For in good sooth, he that never beginneth can never end; and he who would have much learning, must begin his labours with a little; therefore I do hold this to be one of those fallacies which throw an obstacle in the way of improvement, and therefore ought to be removed from the path.

Science duly followed up doth elevate man to his greatest perfection; but even a small tincture thereof is not unuseful, for thereby is the mind rescued from that utter brutishness which leaveth it the mere tool of sensual and animal desires; and he who seeketh learning because he would not leave unused any of God's good gifts, will be in no danger of drawing therefrom any of that idle vanity which hath no part in the character of a good Christian. Every approach, however distant, to the enjoyment and appreciation of spiritual pleasures,—and of this class are learning and science,—is an approach also towards a capability of that immortality of spiritual

happiness which is promised us, and they who discourage such attempts in those large classes of mankind that are necessitated to live by their daily toil, do ill service to God, by arresting his creatures in their progress towards the fulfilment of their great end and aim. Why should not the humblest begin in this life the course of instruction which hereafter is to receive its completion, in "knowing even as we are known?"

"*I will retire from business, and prepare for another world.*"

Who is there who hath not heard some honest, painstaking man uttering some such saying as this, when old age is coming on? Yet well meant as this may be, and plausible as it soundeth to the unthinking, I know no greater, though alack no more common error than this notion, that the common engagements of this world are a hinderance to our preparation for the next: for I do surely believe, and think I have the warrant of scripture and reason therefor, that we were sent into this probationary state to the end that our souls might learn experience among the diverse circumstances of active life, so as to know good from evil, and never to hazard the falling from glory when once attained, by any

such mistake as was committed by those spirits that kept not their first estate. But if we retire from temptation, we deny ourselves the schooling which God appointed for our better teaching, and so far from avoiding the temptation to evil, we increase it tenfold. For there is no such good friend to virtue as that useful weariness which leaveth no time for a selfish cogitation over the means of gratifying the animal nature: yea, he who, in his daily charge, be it what it may, hath been just and true, hath taken no undue advantage, nor oppressed any, if rich;—who hath served truly, and in no way defrauded his employers, either by negligence or dishonesty, if poor;—and who hath lived in Christian love and amity with all his fellow men, whether connected with him by blood or otherwise; hath prepared well for another world, albeit his prayers may have been short, and his time actively employed, even to his dying day.

It is not for our "much speaking" that we shall be heard; and the brief but earnest aspiration of the heart towards God, which a wise and good man doth use to sanctify the business of the day withal, while pursuing the avocations of this world; hath in it more of the vitality of religion, than the dawdling meditations of one

who maketh prayer the object of his life, rather than the means of leading that life aright. We pray for aid to perform our duties; but to use many prayers, and perform few duties, is but a mockery and a folly; for man thus disguiseth to his own conscience his cowardice and indolence, and fancieth that he is pious and virtuous, whilst in truth he is only idle and useless. Doubtless there is a time when increasing infirmity may make a man shrink from the fatigue of business which affordeth no respite from toil: but then this greater quietude is but a concession necessarily made to the needs of the body, and is not at all to be considered as the means of improving the health of the soul: on the contrary, we have all seen and know, that it must be a strong and well disciplined mind which can resist the natural propension towards the vices which arise out of this state of inaction; such as peevishness, selfishness, and consequent carelessness of the comfort and happiness of others.

When we entertain any doubt as to the soundness of our opinions, there is nothing which doth so strengthen and clear our apprehension, as the recurring to what Lord Bacon doth well term the great book of God's works. Now we know that when Adam fell from his

first estate, God imposed on him a law, which experience sheweth to be still the law of human nature, that "in the sweat of his brow he should eat bread." No man can propound to himself that the loving Father of all his works would either inflict a punishment for vengeance rather than for amendment on the first offender, or replenish the surface of this globe with beings disqualified, by the very law of their existence, from the pursuit and attainment of their ultimate good: we may, therefore, reasonably conclude that the toil imposed on man was intended to be the strengthener and safeguard of his virtue, and to guide his frailty in the true path to life eternal. We see it to be the appointment of God,—for what he suffereth is so far his appointment, that he might prevent it, and doth not;—I say we see it to be the appointment of God that millions must go forth to their daily toil, if they mean to eat their daily food: nay, the very necessity for food, which is the cause of this labour, is especially created by God. Then if such be the order written in the book of His works, we must, unless we are determined to shut our eyes, and not read therein, conclude that retirement and inaction are not the circumstances best fitted for the develope-

ment of the spiritual life within: which doth indeed rather thrive and flourish upon the fulfilled duty of each day; even if it were no more than the conscientiously doing an honest day's work, for the allotted day's pay, whether seen or not: and in like manner, vice pineth and dieth in the mind, when quiet sleep, the result of labour, filleth the hours which are not given either to active employ; or to the exercise of those kindly social affections, which so readily twine about the heart, when the space for their enjoyment is short, and the zest of their enjoyment is not dulled by satiety.

Instead therefore of seeking a discharge from all duty, as the means of improving the soul, whose true life is the fulfilment of duty, we should endeavour rather, as age approaches, to cut out for ourselves occupation sufficient for the diminished powers of the body, such as shall give room for the exercise of that concern for others, and carelessness of self, which form the best grace of youth, and which may still hover, like a bright halo round the head of age, making grey hairs lovely, and giving earnest, even in this life, of what will be the society of "just men made perfect," in the next.

"*The poor beetle that we tread upon,*
In corporal sufferance finds a pang as great
As when a giant dies."——

SHAKESPEARE.

THE poet hath sometimes a knowledge that may astound us of many things which, pertaining as they do, to human nature generally, he hath, as it were, with him in his closet, they being in his own spirit: but of those things which are external to him he cannot have farther cognizance than others of his age and country; and, regarding those, he doth only repeat, and thereby perpetuate, the fashion of his own times. And herein I note an error, inasmuch as his words oft times gain undue weight in those latter cases from his acknowledged skill in the first. For it doth in no way derogate from his marvellous powers, to say that such fashion of the time may be ill grounded, so far as regardeth science, since the business of the poet is to delectate the imagination, and mend the heart, by his lively pictures of human nature; not to become a teacher of natural history or philosophy; therefore if, in noting popular errors, I note also a mistake of the above quoted most honoured

writer, I hold myself in no way disrespectful to his memory.

Now I would commend to notice that though the fins of fish, in regard to the arrangement of the bones be typical of the human hand, no one will affirm them to be capable of executing the office whereto our hands are appointed; yet it would be expecting nearly such a miracle as the exercise of manual dexterity by a fish, were we to attribute the like power of feeling to a beetle, whose nerves are dependent on many separate ganglia, as belongeth to a being in whose large brain all the sensations conveyed by the spinal cord from the delicately sensitive skin, are concentred, and held up, as it were, for reason to take cognizance of, and relieve them when painful. Reasoning from analogy, we cannot either assert or credit this, for in the human body the action of the viscera is for the most part confided to the regulation of such a set of ganglia and their dependent nerves, connected but slightly with the brain; and no one needeth to be told that these actions do proceed with so little of consciousness on our part, that a man shall hardly know if his heart beateth or his stomach digesteth, save when disease interrupteth these

functions: the natural conclusion herein would therefore be, even if direct experiment had not confirmed it, that a system of ganglia of this kind ministereth little, if at all, to sensation. And furthermore doth the beetle need human keenness? Is it the wont of the Almighty to bestow powers which can never be exercised? What purpose doth sensitiveness to pain serve, if not that of a faithful and ever ready monitor to make us vigilant against such accidents and circumstances as were formerly the occasion thereof? And to what shall it profit a worm beneath the sod that it should have power to feel, and a smarting reason to dread those haps and chances, against which it hath neither wit to devise, nor skill to execute defences? Such a boon surely were a gift more worthy of a dæmon, than of the God whose name is Love. And should any object to this scientific truth, that it may breed cruelty to God's creatures; I answer that they *are* his creatures; and, therefore, that while he who loveth cruelty would not be restrained, even if the beetle had a human frame; he that loveth God will respect even the smallest impress of his hand. Nor is our estimate of the greatness and goodness of the Creator hereby lessened,

but rather increased; inasmuch as where he hath not given means of escape, he hath not given acute sensibility to suffering. Let no man then call this an imperfection in his work; for in our humble way, even, if a man excel in fashioning the most exactly mechanical chronometer, who shall think it scorn if he make also a mousetrap? on the contrary doth he not rather, in that he can well make a trap for humble service, and a clock for time, to the guidance of the mariner in safety through long voyages, distantly image Him who hath placed the fish in the sea for its humble satisfaction, and man on the earth to prepare for eternity. Our God bestoweth no powers that cannot work for good; —life, and consequently its preservation, is of value to man, inasmuch as it is the shell of the nut laid up for immortality, which shall hardly gain its full proportions if the shell be destroyed; to the animal of lower grade, life deprived of sensual gratification would be a punishment; they are, therefore, suffered to become the prey of other animals ere they suffer decrepitude, and their nervous system is such as maketh their doom no evil.

"It is only a white lie."

THERE is nothing more harmful to virtue than the habit of dwelling always on the confines of vice; for as we find the borderers in all countries do speak a sort of bastard tongue, which savoureth of both the neighbouring languages; so he who liveth always in the vicinage of evil, will hardly keep his good pure and unmixed. I have, therefore, many times wondered how the phrase of "white lies" came into so common usage; for, if I mistake not, falsehood hath so much of the Æthiop about it, that no soap will wash it white. Nay, even its progeny at three or four removes, will still retain an ugly mulatto tinge.

"It is only a white lie," saith one, "it harmeth no one." But of such an one I would ask, harmeth it not thyself? will thy memory be as strong if it be never exercised in accuracy of recollection, as it will be where the anxiety never to trangress the exact truth, causeth a close attention to all circumstances, which are afterwards to be related as they happened, rather than embellished with imaginary adjuncts. Furthermore, doth any one ever tell a direct falsehood for the first time without embarrassment

and blushes? and is not this the safeguard which God himself hath appointed to our virtue, so that the first step in evil being so painful, we shall have no inclination to make a second. Is it no harm to thee if by habit thou lose thy sensibility to this voice of the good Spirit of God, which is sent to guide thee in the right road to heaven? Nay, even as regardeth our worldly convenience, it is rare if he who is known to tell "white lies" with so little of inward concern as to reveal no trace of it in his face, shall gain credit for his serious words. Confidence between man and man is thus shaken, and that most sweet consciousness of having striven to assimilate ourselves to God in the most essential attribute of his being, is altogether lost.

It is said of the philosopher Xenocrates, that when an oath was proffered to him, previous to giving his testimony in a court of justice, the Athenians with one voice cried out, that it was an insult to demand an oath from a man who never in his life had uttered a falsehood; and he was not allowed to be sworn. Now it is to be noted of this philosopher, that when he was sent on an embassy to King Philip of Macedon, that astute monarch, after his departure, declared that Xenocrates was the only one of the

Athenian chiefs whom he had been unable to bribe. Such near friends are truth and honesty.

And what is the object of these "white lies?" Vanity it may be, that men may say we tell a good story; or it may be that we seek to entertain the company by telling with a grave face to a friend some untruth, which if he believe, he shall thereby become an object of ridicule. But is this to be deemed an exact squaring of our actions by the golden rule of—"Do unto others as ye would they should do unto you?" For, methinks, few do readily abide the being flouted and jeered at themselves, however well inclined they may be to jeer at others. And here again, the loss doth in the end redound to ourselves; as indeed it doth whensoever we break any law of God; for many a man hath lost a friend who would otherwise have been a true and a good one, by unseasonable jesting of this kind. And indeed I hold it generally to be a vulgar error, deserving of reprobation, to fancy that God's laws are inscrutable, and hard to practise as regardeth this world; for I know no precise law of the gospel which hath not a direct view to our well-being in this present world, insomuch that the very politeness which is enforced in society as requisite to the comfort

and decorum thereof, is nothing more than a feeble copy of the Christian graces which Saint Paul hath enumerated in the thirteenth chapter of his first Epistle to the Corinthians. Without some truth we know well that society could not go on, and it is an ill cleverness which striveth to weigh how small a portion of it may serve worldly purposes; for the soul in the meantime is abridged of its proper food, and pineth and wasteth away in a hopeless atrophy.

OF GENIUS.

AMONG the many errors common in the world, there is no one more common, or more hurtful, than the vulgar opinion respecting genius: namely, that it is an especial gift from heaven, whereby men become accomplished in science or art, without any sweat of their own brow; a happiness which hath befallen no man, I think, since Adam: and yet we may daily hear persons excuse themselves from pursuing this or that study, because "they have no genius for it"—a manifest self-deception; since excepting in the instance of music, wherein the fineness of the organ supersedeth some of the rudimentary part of learning, and a child shall thus be found sometimes to accomplish at once, what to others would cost a longer application, I know of nothing that is to be gained without labour. Nay, even among these early prodigies, though for children, their skill be marvellous, yet if this precocious display of talent be not followed up by farther teaching and exerci-

tations, maturer years will disappoint the early promise: and yet in this case the tools are in a measure ready made, and their use familiar: for the voice can execute without schooling, much of what the ear demandeth. But in other things it is not so—the painter must learn the art of mixing and laying on of colours by a deep study of the nature of the materials, and a long experience of their effect; their "behaviour" under particular circumstances, as it may be an experimental chemist would shape his phrase. The sculptor, however great his conceptions, must learn to temper and mould the clay of his model, and to use the chisel skilfully: and if astists had disdained this patient toil, and trusted to their heaven born genius, the world would never have been delectated by the sight of their works; which yet we shall hear men term efforts of such sublime genius that no one who is not so gifted can ever hope to rival them. Could one of these supine admirers of excellence ask these men how they arrived at such a point of perfection, both in their conception and execution, he would hear of days and nights devoted to unremitting toil with a perseverance which nothing could daunt: and will discover at last, that this envied gift of genius, is nothing else but a mind

cultivated with an industry which others shrink from, through their laziness of intellect. The proper answer to a person who should thus laud an artist's genius at the expence of his diligence, exclaiming, "*I* should never accomplish this if I were to work for my whole life,"—would be, "Work as I have done for two years only, and see what will come thereof."—But thou shalt find that thy admirer of genius will never consent to an application as severe as the so called gifted individual imposeth on himself; but will go away repeating his parrot like words, in the hope of satisfying himself in his supinity, and persuading both himself and others, that his idleness is no sin; and so he will fancy that he hath established an axiom, when he hath only delivered himself of a declaration that he is too indolent ever to excel.

Nor is this true in regard to art alone; for the mathematician, however powerful his mind, must submit to long and wearisome calculations: the chemist, the natural philosopher, the anatomist, must trace the course of nature with patient toil, ere they attain to any of those discoveries, which, when made, are hailed by the world as the offspring of an almost divine intellect. Kepler was contented to devote two

and twenty years to his calculations, ere he was enabled to publish those true views of science which have made his name immortal. Never did any coin come fresher, and sharper stamped, from the very mint of genius: for those views overturned all the time honoured notions of circular movements among the heavenly bodies, and introduced that new principle of the ellipse, which has led to all that mastership of astronomical science that later observers have attained to. But had he suffered his indolence to have whispered to him during the failures and difficulties of that long period,—"It is useless to pursue this, which I have evidently no genius for; eight or ten years have been wasted in trying to advance, and I have made no progress,"—the world would have lost one of the brightest names in the list of its great men; and mariners might still have been exposed to those fearful dangers of the sea, which his discoveries in science have now taught men so far to master. But Kepler had confidence in human nature, and he persevered.

Doubtless it is the man who feeleth most deeply the nobleness of the gift of reason which God hath bestowed upon him, who will address himself the most diligently to the work of

making it available "for the glory of the Creator, and the relief of man's estate,"—and this, as I believe, is the true secret of genius. He trusteth to his Lord, that the talent entrusted to him will bring rich interest, if it be duly used, and he doth so use it; for in this trade there is no fear of bankruptcy. Wrapped in the napkin, it doth but tarnish, and cometh back to the hands of his Lord the worse for its want of wear. Let him then who would have genius, wrestle for it as the patriarch Jacob wrestled with the angel of the Lord, and though the night-long struggle may leave his body the weaker, his point will have been gained.

OF SOME ERRORS RESPECTING THE NATURE OF EVIL SPIRITS.

WHILST treating of vulgar and frequent errors in men's notions of things, methinks those which are so generally current respecting evil spirits, deserve specially to be examined; for not only be there many falsehoods thus received as truths, but these falsehoods do minister, as it were, and pander to the ill dispositions of men; and furnish an excuse wherewith to salve a wounded conscience, without applying the sharp caustic of a true and fruit bearing repentance. And truly the common and vulgar notion of the Evil One, doth so much trench upon the attributes of God, that when we have, according to the adage, "given the devil his due,"—such as the vulgar apprehension of the great mass of the people doth make it, I know not what distinction we leave for the Deity. For the common notion is, that the devil doth tempt us to evil by suggestions whereof we have no note but the feeling such or such

thoughts or desires; and of the millions which are now living on the face of the earth, almost every one at this moment that I am writing, will be sensible of something within or without him that warreth against perfection. "It is the devil—the tempter,"—saith the unreasoning believer: but is he then omnipresent, the attribute of Infinity? His suggestions, it is said, are to our thoughts; but what can read them save Omniscience? Is God so wont to give his honour to another, that he will thus throw two of the brightest jewels of his crown of perfection to a creature in rebellion against him? "It is for the trial of our faith," saith the unreasoning believer: then doth the temptation come primarily from God: but this Scripture doth forbid us to conceive; for saith the Apostle, "Let no man say he is tempted of God, when he is led away of *his own lusts*, and enticed,"* by that animal nature, namely, which we hold in common with the brutes, and which requireth the control of the rational part of us to keep it within due bounds, so that the soul may not be imbued with the taint of unruly earthly desires. And this notion of the extreme power of the devil is the

* James i. 13, 14.

growth of the last two or three centuries; for we shall find all the legendary tales of the middle ages, figuring the evil spirit with the characteristics of the satyr of the Ethnicks; easily foiled and cheated by man, and vanquished often, in strength or in wit, by the saint whom he assailed, by bodily, not by spiritual temptations; for I know of no instance among early legends, when the tempter is represented as a merely spiritual being.

Good Doctor Martin Luther, who may be considered as the father of our reformed churches, speaketh of devils visiting his chamber in the shapes of animals; a clear deception of the senses, caused by undue excitement of the brain; but also in his calmer moments he describeth devils as melancholy spirits, inhabiting marshes, and desolate places, and ruins; and not by any means as having that ubiquity which is now attributed to the universal tempter. Now this description of the devil, given by him, is exactly that which the ancients did give of their δαίμων, or *dæmon*, by the which word they described the spirit of a dead man after it had quitted the body: for they, conceiving it to have a separate existence, did imagine it to be a wandering, and somewhat unhappy being, specially inhabiting

deserts and desolate places, or marshy forests, such as were then to be found in Britain; which country was, for that cause, then thought to be a special residence of dæmons. Nor was this word understood by the Greeks in a bad sense; for every disembodied spirit was, in their phrase, a dæmon; good, or bad, according to the disposition of the former man. In those days, when the apparently eternal stars were held to be spiritual existences, self moved, and divine, it was an easy transition to imagine the bright *ignes fatui*, so commonly seen in the night in marshy places, to have a something of this divinity also, and thus it came to be thought that if the stars were gods, these fiery exhalations which did glance and move about, now seen and now disappearing, were the appearances of that half divinity, the soul of man: and thus came the marshes of Britain and other places, to be peopled in imagination with these dæmons, or disembodied souls: a belief which, like the Zabianism, or star worship, whereof it was part and parcel, did spread nearly over the world in former times.

But there was also a form of this Zabianism which grew into more fame about the time of Darius the son of Hystaspes, through the inter-

vention of Zoroaster, under the title of the Magian doctrine; whereby the influences of the world were held to be divided between the Good and Evil principle; the one typified by the sun and light,—the other by the night and darkness; these two principles being co-eternal, and in constant opposition to each other. This doctrine, which spread widely over the Persian empire and its dependencies, tainted, in many instances, the later Jewish faith, no less than that of dæmons which they had learned from the Greeks, and haply also from the Egyptians: and in the embodiment of Satan, first in the book of Job, written at a time when Zabianism was prevalent,* and after that in the writings of the Rabbins, we find a mixture of the Magian Evil Principle, and the Greek dæmon, with somewhat of their own faith besides. This was the prevalent superstition in the times of our Saviour Jesus Christ: and all violent diseases were held to be caused by the intervention of dæmons, or souls of dead men, who, when ill disposed, were supposed to enter into the living body of another man, and thus to inflict torment upon the person thus possessed; which

* See Job xxxi. 26—28.

superstition our Saviour doth well describe when he illustrateth his rebuke to the men of that generation, by the example of the unclean spirit, that when expelled, walketh through desert, or desolate places, till he finally returneth with a company of seven others worse than himself, to torment the same man: in which description we see plainly that the spirit here spoken of was none other than the before mentioned δαίμων of the Greeks, as well as the devil of the famous Doctor Martin Luther. But now, to the unlearned much confusion of ideas hath arisen from the constant translation of δαίμων, or *dæmon*, by *devil;* because they attach to this latter word a meaning which it is likely the first translators never meant to give to it, "He hath a devil and is mad,"* is a description at once of the assumed disease, and the imagined cause thereof.

I have many times thought that it was owing to the lofty and grandiose descriptions given in the Paradise Lost, that men, since the time when that poem came to be popular, have invested Satan with a kind of attributes never before assigned to him; and as was natural to the

* John x. 20. Δαιμόνιον ἔχει καὶ μαίνεται.

increasing spirituality of religion, have more and more divested him of the notion of locality and form, till the Evil One of this age is become in effect and conceit of men, the Evil Principle of the Magians: i.e. a power co-existing with, and warring against the will of the good Deity. And this, I must note as a most pestilent error, equally unauthorized by Scripture and by reason: and if any shall imagine this notion of theirs to be borne out by some passages which are freely quoted on such occasions, I must remind the unlearned reader, first, that as I have said already, many passages translated *devil* are in the original *dæmon* (δαίμων) and that when the word *diabolus* (διάβολος) occurreth, this term, in common parlance, meaneth an accuser or slanderer, as when the apostle reproacheth the women who are *diaboli*, i.e. slanderers.* It is to be farther borne in mind that the Christians of that day were pursued by the heathen with all manner of calumnies: and this will help us to the true application of many of the passages where this word is used in the Epistles of

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*1 Tim. iii. 11. Γυναῖκας ὡσάυτως σεμνὰς μὴ διαβόλους...Tit. ii. 3. Πρεσβύτιδας ὡσαύτως ἐν καταστήματι ἱεροπρεπεῖς μὴ διαβόλους...

the Apostles; where it generally applies to those accusers of the faithful: as when, 1 Tim. iii. 7, it is required that the bishop shall have a good report from them which are without, i.e. the heathen, "*lest he fall into reproach, and the snare of the slanderer*," or *informer*,* (διαβόλου.) In like manner the apostle Peter, in the fourth chapter of his first epistle, having warned his converts not to be terrified at the fiery trial of persecution, proceedeth in chap. v. 8,† to recommend them to be sober minded and vigilant; because their slanderous accuser was walking daily among them, seeking his prey: whom they were to resist, by steadfastly adhering to their Christian faith; knowing also that not the Christians only, but their brethren that were in the world, i.e. the unconverted heathen

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* Δεῖ δὲ αὐτὸν καὶ μαρτυρίαν καλὴν ἔχειν ἀπὸ τῶν ἔξωθεν, ἵνα μὴ εἰς ὀνειδισμὸν ἐμπέσῃ καὶ παγίδα τοῦ διαβόλου.

† Νήψατε, γρηγορήσατε· ὅτι ὁ ἀντίδικος ὑμῶν διάβολος, ὡς λέων ὠρυόμενος περιπατεῖ ζητῶν τίνα καταπίῃ. ᾧ, ἀντίστητε στερεοὶ τῇ πίστει, εἰδότες τὰ αὐτὰ τῶν παθημάτων τῇ ἐν κόσμῳ ὑμῶν ἀδελφότητι ἐπιτελεῖσθαι· wherein it may be observed that the lack of the Article to the word diabolus doth deprive it of its Substantive sense and make it in a manner an Adjective to *ἀντίδικος*.

suffered the like afflictions. For it is well known that from the days of Tiberius, downwards, the informers so frequently held up to detestation by Tacitus the historian, under the title of *delatores*, were the very scourge of society: no man being safe from their pestilent accusations.

Much more might be said which the learned critic will not want my aid to discover, and which to the unlearned would haply seem wearisome, I shall not, therefore, pursue this examination of words, but call upon those who have hitherto so lightly received this notion respecting the great might of the tempter, to review it by the light of reason and common sense: for where were the goodness of God, had he endowed a wicked Spirit with such power over the minds of men, as to leave them small chance of distinguishing between his suggestions and those of the ever blessed Spirit of Grace? Such a thing cannot be for a moment supposed of the loving Father, who hath so cared for our well being in all things: we may, therefore, well conclude, that be these fallen angels what they may, as to their inherent nature and state, their influence over us must be very slight, if not altogether null: and the worst tempter will be found to be that evil spirit in a fair form,—the

corrupt soul of man; for bad companions are for the most part the real seducers of the unwary; and it is not an invisible suggestion that leadeth us astray, but early misgovernment, and the remembrance of evil books, evil conversation, and evil example which taint us with the infection of sin; a poison which may be met by the antidote of wise and holy instruction previously administered, but which when received without such preparation is for the most part deadly. Thus bad men by making themselves the willing promoters of sin here, fit themselves to be the companions of the Evil One hereafter, and are indeed his angels or agents upon earth.

AN INQUIRY IF IGNORANCE BE REQUISITE TO INNOCENCE.

PLAUSIBLE errors be like wild roses: they bear indeed here and there a pleasant blossom, but it soon falleth: and their thick offsets do choke the growth of better things. Among these well sounding errors, I reckon the notion held by some, that innocence is only to be preserved by ignorance of evil. Truly it were a pleasant thing to him who is weary of contemplating the vices and miseries of mankind, to think that there were means of closing eyes, and ears, and understanding, so as never to have cognizance of these ills: but it is childish to sigh after what is clearly impossible; and even were this possible, I doubt much if our happiness, either present or future, would be so great as now it may be, if we do only avail ourselves of the real use of knowing the evil, by choosing of our own free will the good, and persevering in the pursuit thereof. For to *know* evil, and to *do* it, are two widely different things.

The only man who ever had full cognizance of human nature, was he who being himself the bodily shrine of the Deity, and his own human soul in perfect union with its Divine Prototype, could measure the influences of the corporeal on the spiritual by mere self-examination; and we may well believe that when the ever blessed God, as Saint Clement of Alexandria doth strongly express it, came as a man, in order through human lips "to teach man how he might become a God," and to be as the Apostle hath it, "an ensample" for our imitation, we may walk safely under his guidance. Now a very few words of his enemies' reproaches will show that the saying of the heathen, *homo sum et humani nihil a me alienum puto*, was not inapplicable to him. He was called by those who, in that age also, thought a separation from the evil world the best safeguard of innocence, "a glutton and a wine bibber; a friend of publicans and sinners," which terms being taken with that largeness of interpretation which belongeth to the slanders of an enemy,—who generally hath skill enough to ground his ill sayings upon some apparent truth,—would seem to show that this only perfect man who ever trod this earth of ours, mixed among all sorts; as if to show the

beauty of holiness, contrasted with the ugliness of vice; and thus to win men from their sins, by making them love virtue better. God, who knoweth all things, seeth every day more sin than the worst of us would care to talk of in common society; yet that complete knowledge of evil, though it saddened, did not corrupt the human soul of the Saviour; he wept for his "brethren according to the flesh;"—abhorred vice, yet loved man;—lived among us,—lived among us too at a season when evil was rife, and when the corruption of society generally had arrived at a point that required no less an intervention than that of God himself to check it. All this he saw and knew, and yet,—with all the infirmities, passions, and temptations of a man,—he passed the dangerous season of youth unspotted; happy in his spiritual union with God, and ready to bear all that evil men could inflict, in order to ensure that union to all eternity.

But he "came for our ensample:" innocence therefore is made of other stuff than ignorance; yea we shall find that it is a substantive rather than a negative quality; and consisteth not so much in a mere absence of evil,—for then the house might be only swept and garnished to

make it a readier home for the dæmon when he cometh,—as in the presence of good which leaveth no room for him to enter.

And now, having shown that the ignorance of evil is not necessary to innocence, the question remaineth, which to parents and teachers is an anxious one, how the knowledge of it may be communicated without peril to virtue?—and here again that perfect "ensample" leaveth us not to doubt. The knowledge of evil, along with all other knowledge, was communicated to the mind of the child at the earliest age wherein it can receive knowledge; since as his human constitution was perfect in soul and body, so the spiritual union with the Deity was also complete from the first: therefore, to Christ, it was among the first of his recollections as a human being. Doth not this show us that the ordinary course is wrong? We are wont to keep the knowledge of ill from our children as long as possible, so as for the most part to leave it to be instilled into them by those who have a design to corrupt, and therefore paint it in fair colours. It was not so that the young child at Nazareth was educated;—he who, alone, of all men, was educated by God himself. He saw,—for God's own knowledge was in him,—the full ugliness

of vice, and all its eternal consequences, long ere the animal frame had arrived at the point when the voice of the tempter might have its charms; and we have seen the results; strange, that we should never yet have thought of trying the same plan! I do most assuredly think that more make shipwreck of their virtue out of a childish and natural curiosity and inquisitiveness after new things, than out of any inherent love of evil, and that were the constitution of animal nature early set forth to the child by parents or teachers, with that gravity which becometh them; and none of those allurements of sensual pleasure held out, which are the great weapons of the tempter; the child, knowing all that he wisheth to know, at a time when as yet the passions are not awakened, would turn his thoughts to other objects of more import, and greater nobleness; and feel disgusted rather than allured by the conversation of the impure and vicious in after life: and this I say from experience and conviction, no less regarding youth of one sex than the other. I would speak thus, and indeed have so spoken with good effect—"My child, man, in his compound nature, belongeth to two worlds: by this mortal and perishable body he is bound to earth, and partaketh of the nature

of the beasts; his internal constitution is almost the same, he is generated, born, and dieth like them; but in his soul he holdeth something of the nature of God, and hath the promise that if he duly cherish this divine spark, he shall finally enjoy the felicity proper to God himself. We are placed in this world to choose between animal and spiritual enjoyment; for happiness can only be the result of having and doing what we like to have and do; and therefore God leaveth us free. If we bind ourselves to earth by cherishing all our animal propensions, and thinking about all that pertaineth to our animal nature, rather than to our spiritual, then we, having fixed all our pleasures here, can never enjoy any other kind of life; and when this faileth us, which it doth gradually in age, and entirely in death, we have nothing left but useless regrets: whereas if we only give the body so much consideration as shall keep it in health, and devote ourselves to the pleasures of the mind; then we are every day becoming more fit for the happiness God hath promised us. Surely we are more noble than the beasts, and it is pleasant to feel our own dignity; yet he that talketh and thinketh only of the things of the body, seemeth to forget that he hath a rank above them. Would a woman

wish to become no better than a cow; a useful animal, with no thought above bringing her offspring into the world, and caring for their food? Is man formed with a divine soul merely to run the wild career of an untamed colt; to be broken by stripes to do his part in this world, with no thought beyond it?" Should questions arise out of such a conversation, let them be answered fairly, gravely, and truly. Let the child know what his mother suffered in giving him birth: he will love her the better, and when he cometh to man's estate, that thought of bitter suffering, and danger to life, will make the jest of the libertine sound to his ears like the laugh of the executioner. Nor, because I here use the masculine gender, would I confine this knowledge to that sex only: women no less than men must look into the depths of life, ere they will be able to make that free choice of the good, whereon our eternal felicity doth depend: women no less than men are exposed to the arts of the tempter, and have no less need that the childish hand should be trained to use the weapons of defence. Gratify the young mind by bringing before it the wonders of science, not as a drudgery, but a recreation: accustom the child to seek knowledge as a pleasure, and

there is little fear that youth will be misspent, or old age contemptible.

And here too, we may recur to the education of the Saviour, of whose childhood two things are recorded—the first, that at twelve years old he astonished the doctors in the temple by his thirst for knowledge, and the share of it which he had already acquired;—the other, that this true science, thus bestowed by his Divine Father and Tutor, had no evil effect on his human soul; but that he returned to his home, showed all filial duty to his far more ignorant parents, and won the affection of all by his amiable manners. So true is it that real knowledge causeth no vanity. And herein, before I conclude, I would note one error more common and more fatal than all the rest. Whilst contemplating the Divine ΛΟΓΟΣ which spake by the lips of Jesus of Nazareth, we too often forget his complete human nature, and whilst bowing in distant adoration to the ineffable Deity, we overlook the *man* in whom he enshrined his glory. But God doth nothing in vain; he could have spoken to us in the whirlwind, or have written his commands in characters of fire before our eyes: but he chose to come among us as one of ourselves: he sought to lead us back to him by

means of our social affections: to show a human being so amiable that we might love, and imitate because we loved him. Surely then it is the greatest of all errors to cast away the benefits of such an "ensample," and although Christ *lived* in this world upwards of thirty years, to turn our attention only to his *death*. If his life had no benefit for us, why did he go through all the stages of childhood and youth? a better notion is it which I have lately seen expressed. "Christ," says the author, "showed himself among us only as a child and a young man. He well knew that he who followed his steps so far, would need no guide for his old age."

OF ERRORS IN GRAMMAR.

IT would seem strange that in an age which doth boast itself as literary, there should be any need to enumerate errors of this kind, as prevalent among those who have received what in common parlance is called a good, or liberal education: yet, from whatever cause, whether from carelessness, or conceit of knowledge which maketh study needless, it is a thing certain that many barbarisms have crept into the writing and speaking of English, which a moderate knowledge of grammar would have prevented. It was indeed a common saying in the last age, that this English tongue of ours hath no forms of grammar proper to it; and that therefore reading and writing do, as goodman Dogberry is made to say, "come by nature," without the necessity for any study thereof, save such as is gained by the exercise in the Latin and Greek tongues which in "grammar schools" is required. Yet he who should fancy that he could learn German phraseology and idiom by

the study of Latin, would be laughed to scorn by all: why then should it be imagined that the sister dialect hath in it less of grammatical peculiarity?

Unfortunately for lingual purity, the study of grammar hath in it little to captivate the imagination; and most seem to shrink therefrom with a kind of horror, the result of the severities of early pædagogues; and this rendereth the correction of such like errors a task of almost hopeless difficulty: yet that I may acquit mine own conscience, and be in no way an accessory to the murder of the king's or queen's English, I shall endeavour to point out some of the principal modes of defacing and injuring this our ancient tongue.

I will note in the first place the confusion made in the cases of pronouns by persons of good learning in other matters, for though it be well known that in the Teutonic family of languages generally, the four cases chiefly to be noted in the Greek, from whence the old Teutones appear to have derived the main structure of their language,—do exist,—namely the nominative, genitive, dative, and accusative: and though it be equally well known that our tongue is of that family, and so cognate to the German

that the natives of that great country do speak English with a facility unknown to any of the southern nations of Europe,—yet in practice is this matter wholly disregarded; and nominative and accusative are strangely interchanged, to the great discomfort of ears trained to grammatical accuracy. Thus *you* or *ye* may be used indifferently in the nominative; but *you* is always the accusative and dative: and prepositions, it is well known, do not admit a nominative case to follow them. Yet shall we find poets defacing their pages with such oversights as disgrace the following passage, which for its poetic force and depth of feeling, did well deserve a less careless phraseology.

> "Oh serious eyes, how is it that the light,
> The burning rays that mine pour into *ye*,
> Still find *ye* cold, and dead, and dark as night?
> Oh lifeless eyes, can ye not answer me?
> Oh lips whereon mine own so often dwell,
> Hath love's warm, fearful, thrilling touch, no spell
> To waken sense in *ye*? Oh misery!
> Oh breathless lips, can ye not speak to me?"

Here *ye* occurs five times, and twice only is it in its proper place as the nominative of the verb: in each of the others it is either governed by a preposition or a verb transitive, and therefore should have been *you*. To an ear accus-

tomed to a right construction of language such a fault is not a little offensive, and the beauty of poetry is as much vitiated thereby, as if, in the human visage, the eye and eyebrow should be continually changing their relative position, and sometimes the one, sometimes the other, should take the upper place.

Furthermore there groweth out of this disregard of the just declension of pronouns by some authors of good repute, a notion that they are in fact indeclinable, and that therefore the cases must always be expressed by circumlocutions. Thus many a pretender to fine writing would fancy he had done well by using the preposition *of*, in lieu of the genitive case, and will say, *of whom*, rather than, *whose;* although, according to the grammar and idiom of our tongue, the use of the genitive *whose* be far the more proper: for the one relative pronoun *who*, is thus declined,

	Mas. Fem.	Neut.
Nom.	Who	Which
Gen.	Whose	Which
Dat. & Acc.	Whom	Which

and the idiom of the Teutonic family of languages doth require, for beauty and strength of expression, the use of the genitive case, wherever the hissing sound thereof doth not so far make

it unpleasant to the ear as to require it to be avoided *euphoniæ gratiâ*.

Beside this confusion in the pronouns, another error doth very commonly find place in conversation and periodical publications, and sometimes also in writers of a better order; namely, the putting of an adverb where the true construction of the language doth require a conjunction. The true place of the adverb, as the name doth in a measure import, is after the verb, i.e. *added* to it, while the conjunction goeth before it; yet we shall commonly hear the adverbs of time *directly* and *immediately*, placed in the stead of the conjunctive phrase *as soon as*. If the adverb be ever allowed a place before the verb in good writing, it is then merely a companion of a preposition giving intensity and preciseness to it, as it doth also in some cases to a noun adjective, as '*directly after* hearing'—'*immediately on* hearing'—or with an adjective, as '*directly* good'—'immediately relative to'—but never should it be used in the fashion of—'*directly* he heard'—instead of '*as soon as* he heard.'

Then again we find all writers and teachers eschewing with especial care, the placing of a preposition at the end of a sentence: yet in the *Hoch Teutsch*, or German, which is the younger

sister of English Saxon, it is a rule that under certain circumstances it shall be so placed; and in the racy, idiomatic language of our elder writers it is frequently found to be so; though perhaps few discover why this style to our ears soundeth better and more forcible. *Inclined to*, —*hoped for*, and the like, are phrases of this nature, and as happily this old Saxon form retaineth its hold in the spoken, though it be losing it in the written language, we may peradventure hope that writers will at last find out that when addressing English ears, they should use the English tongue.

There is another fault heard frequently in common parlance, but not yet, as I think, written; videlicet, the use of the noun adjective *like* with a verb and its nominative, a position which it hath no claim to, in the room of the conjunction *as*. Thus we shall hear school boys and young college men say 'I did that *like* he did,' instead of—'*as* he did'—an error, which though it have not yet found its way into print, will do so ere long, unless this mode of speaking be corrected.

And so much may suffice for the errors in grammar of such as are by courtesy supposed well instructed on such points. But there is a

further error in books especially devoted to the science which is of yet greater import, as it not unfrequently may vitiate the sense of a translation, and thus deceive the unlearned reader. Every foreigner who would learn English, knoweth to his cost, that if in the just use of *shall*, and *will*, lieth one of the main beauties of the language, so also doth its greatest difficulty: yet it is for him both sad and strange that no one hath clearly set it forth in any work of grammar. In such works I do constantly find the future tense of verbs written *I shall or will* as though their use were indifferent: a fault which leadeth to many mistakes, and much mockery of strangers, by those who from long habit have gained the true use of these words. Neither is this without ill effect in the most important of all writings; for in more than one passage in Holy Writ a careless putting of one word for the other by the translators doth strangely confound our understanding thereof. For according to common usage, which in a living and spoken tongue is the best rule of signification, the simple future tense runneth thus,

I shall	We shall	go
Thou wilt	Ye will	
He will	They will	

and if any one will change this arrangement, he will perceive that he saeth not what he meaneth to express; as is well seen in the oft repeated jest of the Frenchman in the water, exclaiming "I *will* be drowned—nobody *shall* help me," wherein by confounding the different persons of the simple future tense, an extraordinary perversion of sense is occasioned. Let us but reverse the order thus

I will	We will	} go
Thou shalt	Ye shall	
He shall	They shall	

and we shall find that in this form, which for distinction's sake I shall call the second future; it hath an imperative force not by any means belonging to the first. And though this distinction be wanting in those modern tongues which are derived from the Latin, which hath it not, yet we find it to exist in some measure in the Greek, which hath an imperative future; and in the Hebrew, which hath besides the simple active voice, and the future thereunto belonging, another voice which is causative: the future whereof partaketh of the nature of our second future, as above noted, and this voice the Rabbins are wont to call *Hiphil*. Now in that passage of the book of Genesis where the LORD

God is said to speak to Adam and his wife after their transgression, the tense used is not in Hiphil, but in the simple active future, notwithstanding which the translators have rendered it by 'thou *shalt*,' whereby the notions of the unlearned are much confounded, and they do rather see therein a stern judge condemning, than a good father telling his children the necessary consequences of what they had done; they having been forewarned that, according to the nature given them, such consequences must ensue. A serious evil resulting from a seemingly small grammatical fault!

It might well nigh be thought from the commonness of this confusion in books professing to treat on grammar, that the English nation was jealous of all others, and resolved by keeping the key of their language in a labyrinth, to prevent any but themselves from attaining to the use thereof: a great reproach to the people, were it true; but scarcely a less reproach is it, that there should be so general an ignorance of grammar rules as to render the right speaking our language a matter of custom only, no one being able to give any good reason therefor.

OF CERTAIN ERRORS CURRENT IN REGARD TO DISEASE AND MEDICINE.

IN times past when a man fell sick, he was wont, if he were great enough to find that expense practicable, to send to some oracle for counsel; as Ahaziah, albeit he might have known better, seeing that he was of Israelitish blood, sent messengers unto Baal, the god of flies, at Ekron, to inquire concerning the disease he was suffering from; and if this habit infected even the people chosen to be the depositaries of the truth, we may well guess how prevalent it must have been among the heathen. To this succeeded the belief in particular shrines of Christian saints, and you shall even yet see, it may be, in some chapel of this kind in a remote place, where the ancient superstition surviveth merely under a change of name, as great a number of ex voto offerings of silver and waxen eyes, legs, arms, and the like, as ever covered the walls of the temple at Delphi. Now-

adays superstitions of this kind have taken a fresh course, and notwithstanding that they no longer enrich the priests of Æsculapius, or of Apollo, or of Isis, they nevertheless set up for themselves some living idol, and he being supposed, like the Pythoness of old, to be inspired with a certain divine afflatus, they pay their offerings to him as religiously as ever did any ancient votary of the god or the saint, and trust to him with as implicit a faith; witness the tales I have heard of a certain Mr. St. John Long, who, in regard to the excoriations he practised upon his votaries, might haply be considered as an avatar of that Ekronitish god of flies, whose fame tempted even the king of Israel to apply to him: for with the aid of some French or German critic I doubt not it might be proved that Baal-zebub was none other than an emplastrum of cantharides.

But leaving that matter to those who are skilled in such etymologies, I will affirm that there is no medical practitioner of good sense and erudition who doth not regret that any such oracular veneration should be bestowed on him, seeing that it is for the most part no less harmful to himself than it is to the patient, who ignorantly expecteth him to work miracles when

he can only bring to his aid the patient attention of an experienced and carefully educated man. Yea, ofttimes, in order to satisfy the unreasoning patient, who indeed is usually most *im*patient, he hath to hold language which savoureth more of the charlatan than of the wise and cautious examiner of nature, and thus may lose credit in the eyes of the better instructed, while he is applying himself to the calming of an uneasy mind, which fevereth the body the more from the not well knowing what it hath to dread.

It is an ill finish to a thing in itself good, that the division and subdivision of labour which in later times hath produced so much excellence in arts mechanical, hath been carried also into learned professions and sciences, wherein such minute division is not profitable, but the contrary thereof. For each man applying himself with eagerness to his own particular calling, doth thereupon conclude that others do the like; and thus imagineth that he may trust them for all those parts of science which pertain more immediately to their especial vocation: and thus he seeketh not to inform himself enough thereupon to be able to judge of the competence of him whose counsel he seeketh, be it physician

or surgeon, lawyer or priest: albeit in his capacity of a human being living in society, he be personally and deeply interested in all the questions which these faculties do profess to treat of. Yet so little doth the applicant ofttimes know of his own affair, that he puzzleth his oracle. Thus a lawyer shall often be hard put to it, to gather from his client those points which chiefly bear upon his case; and the physician hath no less difficulty in detecting the symptoms which shall guide him to a true knowledge of the disease: the ignorance of the patient thus hebetizing, as it were, the art of the doctor, by concealing, or forgetting, it may be, as a matter of no signification, the more important though perhaps less troublesome symptom, and detailing at inconvenient length what might well be passed over. Thus many a man hath become permanently insane because a headache, or a little more than usual watchfulness, are held to be things scarcely worth attention; and no medical aid is called in, or any remedy attempted, till the brain is so seriously diseased as probably to make all remedies vain. No year passeth wherein there is not some instance of suicide committed by persons who had for a time complained of headache, and seemed depressed in

spirits; but whose friends, considering this to be a matter of no concernment, had paid slight heed thereto; and only remembered it for their own advantage, as preventing the forfeiture of goods consequent on a verdict of *felo de se*, instead of noting it for that of the sufferer, by taking measures for reducing that diseased action in the brain, which was indeed the cause of the pain first, and next of the insane self-destruction which followed. I do note therefore as an error of much evil consequence, the notion which some men have, that ignorance of every thing relating to anatomy and medicine is safe and even desirable, so long as some medical practitioner, no matter what his skill, may be within reach.

I have seen this wilful ignorance carried yet farther, indeed to such a point that were it not so grave a matter, that a jest thereon would savour too much of levity, I could gather good matter for laughter thereout. For I remember once hearing it said by a lawyer of good ability, when speaking of a preacher whose church he frequented, "I have been told by persons who are judges of such things, that his sermons are very good. I cannot myself understand them, but that is not my business:" and yet this man

was no scoffer, or despiser of sacred things; but he had seemingly considered the priest as a sort of commissary, paid, and bound by his engagement, to supply food for the souls of a certain district, the which if he did not furnish, it may be that the man of law, judging of another world by that part of this which was his chief concernment, imagined that there would be a legal remedy in the High Court of Heaven; and haply, dreamed of an action for damages if, through negligence of the appointed teacher, he should be defrauded of his share of future happiness.

Now if it be folly so to leave another to cater for our life eternal, as if misery could be borne by proxy, and we should suffer no loss provided the blame of the loss could be thrown on another; I think we must accuse him of a folly only lesser in degree than this one, who should so entirely trust another in regard to his bodily health, as to risk the losing it whilst hoping to restore it: for the lack of skill, or the lack of attention in him who is thus trusted, can neither be detected nor checked by a man wholly ignorant of his own frame and constitution, of the nature of the pharmaceutical preparations employed, of their probable effects, or of the benefit which the pre-

scriber expecteth that he will derive therefrom. The mere mistake of a chemist's boy may thus put his life to hazard, for he knoweth not what he swalloweth: or if the practitioner be unskilful, no *mistake* may be needed to increase the risk. Neither doth some scientifical acquaintance with these matters make a refractory or a hypochondriacal patient, as some profess to apprehend; for quiet submission to our lot doth usually grow out of a rational knowledge of how far it may admit of amendment, how far it must be borne: and on the other hand, there is no obstinacy like that of ignorance, and no phantasm so difficult to remove as that which cannot be reasoned with. For though the imagination, when præternaturally excited, may work wonders through the influence exercised by the brain over the muscular fibre, by means of the nerves thence proceeding, yet is this but a sorry kind of curative process; seeing that it is uncertain, and will oftener be turned against the practitioner, than, may be, it can second him.

There is no charlatan, how ridiculous soever may be his pretensions when tried by the light of sober reason, that doth not find his followers, even in this age of fancied enlightenment; and those who consult this lying oracle shall many

times be found, on inquiry, to be persons of very sufficient acuteness and good sense in their own vocation: yet the clearness of their intellect availeth them not in this matter, which is even of more concernment to comfort than either riches or greatness. But there is one class more especially the prey of such pretenders, videlicet, the female sex, who being, by the erroneous notions in regard to the fitting education for a woman, kept, for the most part, in profound ignorance of every useful part of knowledge, listen to and credit what is told them, because they have never been sufficiently indoctrinated to be able to detect a fallacy either in science or argument. And yet, who needeth so much to know something of anatomy and pharmacy as they, who by their natural constitution are less fortified than the other sex against the assaults of disease?

How much of the imprudence which incurreth sickness, and the waywardness which ill beareth it, would be prevented if men in their youth were taught to know so much of the human corporeal frame as to be able to measure their own powers, and neither over nor under task them! For he who demandeth too much from his muscles or his brain, will strain, and damage

them: but he who demandeth not enough, doth himself a yet more irreparable injury; for then they gain not their due development, and are unfit for use when the occasion calleth for their exertion. And indeed I must herein accuse those of mine own profession of some misapprehension; for you shall find the medical attendant ofttimes deny his patient the use of books, or of writing or of such like amusement, as holding that this kind of occupation will fatigue, and thus retard the cure. Yet the same physician will desire that the sick person shall be taken out of bed for refreshment, and ease of body, so soon as the severity of disease is somewhat abated; nay that, if possible, he shall be removed to another chamber for the sake of a fresher air than that contaminated by his own fevered breath. Hath then the brain no function also which is to be attended to, in order to restore its healthy influence over the other parts? Who among us hath not seen how much the discontents and griefs of the mind impair digestion, and interrupt the regular course of the circulation, with the due secretions therefrom resulting? And shall we imagine to restore the patient by refusing amusement, and keeping him constantly pining under the sick-

ness of hope deferred, thinking of his sufferings because he hath nothing else to think of, and fevering himself with restless wishes for what he cannot have? Leave him his book—he will read till he is weary, and then he will sleep.—Suffer him to write—if his arm or his head ache in consequence, he will soon lay aside his pen and seek repose to fit himself to resume it; and in mean time, if the symptoms be not very urgent, his sufferings will be forgotten, and the cheerfulness of health will return, and aid the cure, it may be, more than all the drugs thou canst administer.

When even a healthy man is put into solitary confinement, we have had good experience in sundry lamentable cases, that his bodily constitution sinketh under the unnatural state of mind thereby engendered. Wilt thou shut up one who is suffering already from sickness, and haply with no society save that of a stupid nurse, without any means of amusing his mind? Shall he have no employment but the counting the beats of his fevered pulse, or the stripes or the flowers in the paper or bed-furniture, it may be; or figuring horrid faces from shadows,—or the fancying landscapes in the veins of the marble chimneypiece,—or the gazing on some portrait,

haply, till he fancieth the eyes move, and he almost shrieketh at the frightful creation of his own phantasy. Is this the way to promote convalescence? My worthy brother, thou art but half a master of the healing art if thou hast never learned to bring the mind to aid in the body's cure. So mighty an agent existeth not in the whole round of natural causes; and thou mayest thank thy favourable stars if it be thy fate to find a patient who can and will mentally recreate himself during sickness; for he will live by the force of intellectual activity, where the weak and desponding would sink and die.

But methinks, I hear it said, "I do not deny my patients fitting amusement—they may read a novel—they may delectate themselves with the visits of the Apothecary, who will listen to all their complaints, and besides giving a large share of pity, will delight them with abundance of talk touching the news of the day."—But this is not the *healthy* exercise of the mind; it is by forgetting ailments, not by talking about them, that the cure is promoted; nor is it to be supposed that the idle desultory gossip of the neighbourhood, or the absorbing interest of a work of fiction, whose merit consists in the taking such hold of the imagination that it can-

not be dismissed at will;—furnish that train of gently consecutive and satisfactory reflections, which may soothe into quiet sleep: for the brain, suffering somewhat of the debility of the rest of the body, beareth not sudden jerks and disruptions of thought, but delighteth in following one subject, or shifting into another by easy stages as it were. The delectations of the wise and good, therefore, during illness are very different from the abovementioned, and we shall find that their favourite recreations will be the truths of science and of religion, the book of God's works, and the book of God's laws. These bring us into immediate communion with the Deity, and as the fabled Antæus gained fresh strength from touching his mother earth, so doth man—the son of the Highest, gain power from bringing his soul into contact with his Almighty Father. Earth and its concerns are so brief, so small, to him whose mind hath been thus employed, that even should the illness promise to be life-long, the thought bringeth no despondency. How can it do so to one who hath no mind to return to the paltry littleness of every day life? Many a great mind hath matured in a sick room works which make it evident that the vigour of intellect—the light of heaven, it may be, beaming on the inward eye,—hath triumphed

over the ills of the body. Oh leave the sick man his books; leave him his lofty thoughts; his hope that even in this seclusion he is not wholly useless; his strong will, his upward aspirations!

I remember some years ago visiting often an excellent man who had long been suffering severely, and whose age left small hope that he would ever recover health. He was wise enough to seek mental recreation, good enough to seek such as gave him peace and hope, nor shall I easily forget the animation which lighted up his pale face as he talked of his favourite pursuit. He had undertaken a critical translation of the gospels, and his delight when he could throw any new light on an obscure passage was boundless. I asked him once how soon he should finish his work. "Never," was his answer; "had I other pressing business to attend to, I might conclude this;—but now, what can I have so soothing as this blessed book always before my eyes? The desire to make my rendering more perfect, gives a definite object and a zest to all my other reading, and I am amused without losing sight of what I love. A work of fiction may serve to divert for an hour a fellow that hath never had an ache in his shoulders, but to one who hath little to enjoy in life save the hope of quitting it, there is no book like this. All

others pall and weary, excepting as they connect themselves with the great end of man's being, and the foundation of his expectations. I sleep quietly when I finish the day in such guise." By thus giving, as he himself expressed it, a definite object to his excursive reading, it gained a sufficient interest to render the mind active: history, travels, philology, all bore in some way on his pursuit; and it was pleasant to see the joyful and triumphant air with which he would sometimes hold up to me a book he had just purchased, exclaiming "I shall find something here for my work." To the day of his death he never ceased to retouch his darling translation.

There is also another error which groweth out of, and is in a measure dependent on the notions which the learned in medicine have unwittingly encouraged. You shall hear it given as a symptom of one disease that it causeth great depression of spirits, of another that it is attended by peculiar irritability of temper; and so on through all the moods which suffering may be expected to produce in untaught or untrained minds; who, as a dog howleth when he is chained up, or snarleth and snappeth at any one who would administer relief to him when injured, yield to all animal emotions, and are

sad or gay as the course of the blood prompteth. But this, though alack! it be a common, is yet by no means a necessary consequence of disease, and though the physician may need to know this when he hath to deal with ill regulated minds, he is wrong if he expect that this shall always be the case, and still more wrong if he assert it so to be. For thus shall he perchance, on the one hand, mistake hugely the case of one who hath so little of the animal in him that he will not howl when he is hurt; and on the other encourage in weak minded persons the yielding to the impulses of peevishness and ill humour, as thinking them such natural consequences of disease as to admit of no restraint: and thus haply the health of the attendant friends shall be more damaged by the weariness of trying to soothe one who thinketh he hath licence for his fretfulness, than his who thus weareth out those who would minister to his comfort. Selfishness is an ugly vice at all times; but sickness hath double horrors if the moral constitution be broken down as well as the bodily: for surely he must have more than ordinarily long legs who would think to step into the blessedness of heaven, from the querulous peevishness which hath made his sick room a hell.

OF THE CONDITION OF SOCIETY AS TOUCHING THE FEMALE SEX.

I SHOULD, I think, hardly satisfy my readers, I am sure I should not satisfy myself, were I to conclude this my discourse without farther inquiry into those false opinions which I have already taken occasion to notice in a more brief and cursory manner, with regard to the true position of women in society, as in this later age it is constituted. For herein it seemeth to me that many errors, bequeathed to us by our ancestors, do continue to bear fruit of more bitter consequence than any that was plucked in Paradise, and as in that fault, albeit the woman may ofttimes be the agent in the evil, all do eat thereof to their great discomfort and detriment. Wherefore I propose, good reader, to note some of these errors, their causes, and, according to my poor apprehension, their remedy also: so that, be thou male or female, thou shalt per-

adventure find this inquiry not wholly useless to thy present instruction and future good.

The first step of such an inquiry must be set very far back, for as the first scene in the drama of human existence was laid in Eden, so we must take that for our starting point: since there, if ever, we shall find what is the true relation of the sexes in society. And if it be said that both forfeited their claim to that true relation when they quitted that sweet garden; be it remembered that in all the dealings of God with man since that time, the object of his dispensations has been the reinstatement of his erring children in the same, yea even in a better state than that which their animal and sensual nature tempted them for a time to abandon: therefore we do properly fulfil his will, and advance his kingdom, by endeavouring to ascertain that true and pristine state, and, as far as in us lieth, to restore it.

Woman then in Paradise was the independent companion and help-mate of man: for where food was to be had for the plucking, she had no lack of other strength than she possessed to aid her in the procuring it; and where she had no enemies, she needed no protection. The aid therefore which she could lend, or receive, could

only be that spiritual and intellectual assistance which human creatures are ever prone to seek from each other; since finite beings always hope to gain something more of the infinite by gathering to themselves the intellectual possessions of others as well as their own. And if, as I conceive, the somewhat more delicate organization, and larger proportionate brain of woman, doth give her, *cæteris paribus*, the advantage of quicker perception, and greater promptitude in mental operation, we may well opine that she was "a help meet for man" in all wherein he needed help, but answerable for her conduct to God alone, from whom she had received the good gift of reason, and freedom to use it. Would we then indeed return to our pristine happiness, and enjoy the comfort of that interchange of mental pleasures which was destined for man as a species, we should return also towards that pristine state of things. But how standeth the case now? Population presseth hard, in this long settled country, on the means of subsistence, and woman hath daily more and more to learn the lesson that she is but the female of that species, the law of whose nature is labour: for the first fault having been that of the animal

part, God by his merciful decree (loving, even in reproof,) weakened its influence, by requiring from it enough of toil to keep it in subjection to the higher and better rule of the rational soul.

Such then being the natural state of the human race, food being made essential to life, and labour requisite to the procurance of food, is the position of woman in society such, either by law or custom, as to enable her to comply with that law which was given for such good purpose, and which no human customs or human decrees can supersede? Is she, by custom and law, allowed to labour for the means of support, or if she hath acquired it, to keep it? and if she be not, what good reason hath society to give for so glaring an injustice? A woman may marry, I shall be told, and then the husband will maintain her. He who answereth thus knoweth that he answereth not truly. Where subsistence is hard to be won, if the woman bringeth nothing to the common stock, marriage is often impracticable, unless for a fool that looketh not to the future; and many a woman *must* remain single for the lack of this world's goods: many more *would* remain single rather than sell their persons for food and raiment,—for a mercenary marriage is but a

market transaction,—if they had any means of honourable labour whereby to eat bread, the sweeter for being that of independence.

Why then should we longer stave off the putting the question which sooner or later must be asked?—Women are found dying of inanition, unable to obtain the wherewith to still the pangs of hunger—why is this?—Why is suicide, why is crime the hopeless resort of her who in common parlance, though not in common usage, is held to be the cherished companion and "better half" of man? This question hath never yet received a satisfactory answer, and haply some may be found to flout at mine, though indeed mockery be no refutation. I reply that woman's position in society is a false one; that healthy, not excessive labour being the law of our existence, she hath nevertheless been either debarred from using it to good purpose, or else doomed to endure it in crushing excess, by defective teaching, which hath obliged her to labour with her hands rather than her head;—by unnatural restraints;—by idle or ill maxims:—and when man striveth to overturn the law of God and nature, he is apt to make wild work of it; and, like the builders of Babel, to find that the fabric he hath sought to raise will remain to

future generations but a ruinous monument of his own folly.

Let us not any longer disguise facts: from the moment that a female child is born into the world she is subjected to an unjust inequality by the laws of this realm: she cannot exercise or enjoy the rights of a free citizen, even if her lot have fallen in fair pasture, and her father having left her wherewith to live, she hath remained single and kept it. If she marry, her very individual existence is merged in that of her husband; the property that she hath in possession is taken from her, or placed peradventure in the hands of trustees, by whose negligence or fraud it is often wasted; and if she afterwards obtain any thing by labour or inheritance, it is not hers, but her husband's: nay she is no longer considered even as a rational and individual agent in the eyes of the law.

Nor is public opinion more just:—go into a school for poor children where the males are receiving such an education as may fit them for clerks and shopmen, bailiffs or gardeners: and if thou remark on the incomplete instruction afforded to the female children, the reply will be —"The gentlemen say it is good enough for girls."—Go a step or two higher: ye shall find

that the father keepeth his daughters ignorant of business; for why should they be taught what they will never have occasion to exercise? and if he sometimes think that after his death they may be destitute, he endeavoureth that they shall have two or three showy accomplishments, and even those insufficiently taught them, that they may take the situation of a governess; and thus the would-be-teachers soon come to be more numerous than the scholars that need them. Look higher yet: science and philosophy are held to be "unfeminine;" and those that call for a better system of teaching shall be mockingly asked, "Would ye make female professors?"

What then remaineth for a woman who must eat, and hath no one to give her bread?—She may toil with her needle.—What sort of maintenance this is, late inquiries have shown: she may work sixteen hours out of the twenty-four, or perhaps all the night as well as all the day, and when she hath ruined health and eyesight, find that she still hath not wherewith to live: or she may go out as a governess if she can obtain that office, even for no better remuneration than her board, or starve when she cannot: or she may enter upon a course of sin and shame if she be young and handsome; or commit

suicide if this fail her. Is this the boon that fathers give their daughters?—Did the law give women the rights of free citizenship, parents would take care that their female, as well as their male children should receive such an education as should enable them to administer their affairs; or if fathers gave their daughters a better education, the law would probably view women with more favour; but by thus arguing in a vicious circle, refusing women their rights because they are held unable to exercise them, and then denying them a useful education because they have no rights to exercise, we inflict unmerited sufferings on a large portion of our species, and render those idle and adulatory sayings which are addressed to women in the heyday of their youth and beauty, the cruellest of all mockeries.

Give the female the same chance as the male, let her mind be strengthened by study, and her body by exercise; let her see what the world is upon whose mercies she is to be cast; and if the care of the law have left her any one right in this so-named free country, let her learn to use it, in order to obtain truer justice for her sex, that the next generation may not find crime, starvation, or suicide, the three alternatives offered for the acceptance of those whom the

world prateth to of "woman's proper sphere,"—nor if strong moral feeling hath eschewed vice, and absolute, bitter, biting want hath unsettled the brain, be told that the wild endeavour to exchange the lingering pangs of hunger for a speedier death is a punishable offence:—a lunatic asylum, not a prison, is for the most part the proper place for such offenders.

When the fanaticism of a past age sent human beings to the stake, a few pounds of gunpowder to tie about the neck, was held a charitable gift, which kind hearts, more merciful than the laws, offered to the sufferer. Yea our own holy martyrs, Ridley and Latimer, disdained not such aid: but when a woman is doomed, by this hard hearted and false judging age, to die by the lingering torture of want, magistrates and judges refuse the *coup de grâce*, and insist that the suffering shall be borne unabridged, out of an assumed concern for the souls of those whose bodies have been left to perish.

Far be it from me to countenance that rash impatience of life which leadeth man to cut short the span which God hath assigned to him: but if, by harshness or neglect, we so embitter the existence of some wretched being, that in spite of the instinctive love of life, it is found a

burthen too heavy to be endured longer; who ought to bear the blame of the sin? The laws and customs which cause the evil, or the unhappy woman, whose brain, reeling under the repeated shocks of suffering; or of remorse—if hunger have been staved off by sin;—perpetrateth an act of violence on herself, whereof it is for God, not man, to take cognizance?

If indeed the numbers of the nation exceed its means of subsistence, let the evil be boldly met: the world is wide, and other lands can offer soil to till when England overfloweth: but let both sexes be placed in a situation to struggle fairly with the difficulty. It is mean, it is hypocritical, to disguise the secret wish to monopolize all profitable employment, under the show of a tender concern for the best interests of "the weaker sex." If we indeed feel that such rivals in the counting-house, the mart, or the lecture-room, would endanger the subsistence of men, while enabling women to maintain themselves; let us at least boldly avow it, and devise a remedy openly. Throw open then the field of intellectual labour: let the female be taught to lighten the toil of the body by the work of the mind: teach her the skill of arithmetic;—what is there in the work of a book

keeper which she might not well and profitably discharge? open to her the wells of ancient literature and modern science, and when they are open, forbid her not to drink thereof herself, and to draw thence enough to quench the thirst of others also. Ye will not have a female professor, forsooth; but do ye not sit and applaud night after night while actresses address crowded theatres? May a woman repeat the words of others in public, but not repeat her own? May she exhibit her person on the stage in such dances as are there performed, and not exhibit an experiment in chemistry? May she sing idle lays to hundreds, but not speak wisdom to them? And is this the boasted care which public opinion taketh of female morals?

It might be matter for longer discourse than I have space for, were I closely to examine, and trace back to their causes in every instance, the evils here noted: but a few of these causes it may be well to state briefly. And foremost among these standeth the inferiority of the woman in regard to physical strength; the which, when many tribes of the great human family (from some of which tribes we of this realm are descended) became rude and barbarous, and warred often for their hunting grounds, or found

it more to their taste to seize the goods of others, than to labour for themselves,—did make females in great measure dependent on the stronger sex for support: and dependence among rude nations hath many of the characters of slavery. During the season of semi-barbarism which succeeded to this, after England had become a settled kingdom under the Teuton races, the code whereon our common as well as much of our statute law is founded, was established; and hereon was grafted, not long after, the Norman feudality; whereby warlike suit and service became the main title to property, and the king's legislative council consisted of such only as held fiefs: for in those days the church also was militant in the worst sense of the word, and the bishop had his vassals, and parcelled out his land in knights' fees. At the period when William of Warenne could cast his sword upon the table when called upon to prove the title to his estate, and that wise and stronghanded monarch, Edward, the first of that name, found himself obliged to submit to this glaive law; it is clear that the female sex had very small chance of obtaining any regard to their rights as human beings: for the rude warrior of that day recognised no right in

any who had not a sword wherewith to maintain it. The wife of a baron was a part of his state, his daughter a part of his property: learning he had none of himself, and he needed none in his companion.

The churchman, the only man in those days who had any skill in letters, was doomed to a life of celibacy by the asceticism which had corrupted the simplicity of Christianity: therefore he sought for no "help meet for him" in his studies; and knew nothing of any females but either such as were shut away from all liberal science within the walls of a convent, or such as ministered only to his baser animal needs: and this ascetic rule, which held that a saint was disgraced by the very society which his mild Master sought and loved, added the finishing stroke to woman's degradation. The warrior despised the feeble hand that could not wield the lance, but he also sometimes pitied and cherished the weak woman who clung to him for protection: it was reserved for a corrupted religious faith to take from her even her self respect; to banish her foot from the holiest spots; to esteem her touch defilement!—yea woman, whose courage had braved the terrors of Jewish prejudice straining law to destroy the

innocent, and, despite of priests and rulers, followed to the cross HIM whom all but his gentle woman-like disciple John had forsaken or forsworn,—was held an unclean creature by those who professed to be HIS servants. There is a tale told of a certain Quaker who having been bitten by a dog, apostrophized him thus—"I will not kill thee, but I will give thee a bad name"—and he raised the cry of "*bad dog*," which being soon mistaken for "*mad*," the poor beast was hunted till he became mad in good earnest: and thus woman, when an ill name had been given her at first, however undeservedly, became subject to treatment which ofttimes caused her at last to deserve it.

A different age hath now arisen; but it is so much the instinct of man to do again what he hath been accustomed to do and to see done, that old habits and opinions still make a stout fight for the upper hand, and yield only inch by inch to the pressure of the times. But nevertheless they *do* yield, and it is therefore at this time especially, that such an inquiry as I have endeavoured to institute is likely to be useful. The world hath been so constituted by its Creator, that in all the relations of life man must still find woman by his side; and by that com-

panionship he must be influenced for the better or the worse: how much all might be benefited were that influence always for the better, I will not here undertake to conjecture, but this I do know, that where a man findeth in a wife, or a daughter, or a sister, the real "help meet for him," he enjoyeth a reduplication of his mental and even bodily powers; and by her loving labour and sweet companionship findeth his toils and cares so lightened of their weight, that he would almost wish to have them for the sake of finding them so dexterously and gently shared and soothed. In this therefore, as in all other things, the doer of injustice findeth, like him who swingeth a flail unskilfully, that it returneth on his own head with the more force, the greater the strength he hath exerted; and man, by his injustice to woman, hath lost much of that solace and help which was designed for him by his Creator. And it might be matter for curious remark on the constitution of human nature, that the injustice is now done rather as a matter of habit than for any good reason: for no one in this age will maintain that either man or woman is disqualified for parts of trust or honour by the lack of physical strength, or warlike

skill: neither in this reformed church will any man hold himself defiled by the society of womankind. Nay, in matters of science and literature, if a woman have courage enough to brave the flouting of fools, and the opposition of relations, and gain erudition in spite of the outcry raised against woman's learning,—when she hath at last achieved fame, her labours will also give her consideration in society. But it is a false and a bad social state when what is *right* to do, is not also *honourable* to do. When God hath given intellect, and an immortal soul to be guided and prepared for its better state by the use thereof, we sin against our Creator if we set human prejudice higher than God's law. "In Christ there is neither male nor female, bond nor free."

But herein, nevertheless, prejudice holdeth its own, maugre God's will: for law and custom having debarred females from profitable employment, a father looketh only to the fitting his daughters for the market, seeing he can no otherwise rid himself of the charge of their maintenance than by shifting the onus from his own shoulders to those of a husband: and for this cause he holdeth that a form which may capti-

vate some roving fancy in the dance, is of more value than those qualities which may make the possessor useful, and consequently happy: therefore female children are right early taught that the care of the *out*side is of more consequence than that of the *in*: and that if the surface of the cranium be daintily ornamented, it matters not what may be the state of the brain beneath it. If such teaching bear its natural fruit, what is the wonder? One who hath for fifteen years been taught that the catching of a husband is the great business of life, and who hath to set before her eyes what is to please man rather than God,—when she hath succeeded in her chace, affordeth small comfort to the prisoner she hath taken: who may be ruined by her extravagance, deprived of his peace by her ill-humour, or disgraced by her misconduct.

I have stated these matters roundly, and roughly, for doth not the chirurgeon need to use rough and sharp remedies when a gangrene is spreading in the body? and this, the gangrene of the body social, requireth something of the like treatment: for what hath been the custom for any long time, hath a kind of prescriptive right in men's minds; and ye shall often find it

a hard matter to prevail on men to see that they have no rational ground for their practice, so much is it become hallowed by age.

Reader, I now bid thee farewell!—If thou be a father, lay to thine inmost heart the dread truth that God will require at thy hands the immortal souls which he hath bestowed on thee, for their nurture in the way of life; and remember that the making thy sons fierce and quarrelsome, by way of being "manly," and thy daughters idle and useless, under the notion that they will thereby become more "feminine," is not the part of a man who hath a denizen of the world of spirits entrusted to his training for good or for evil. If thou be a woman, forget not,—albeit, my lesson may sound harsh to flattered ears,—that thou wert not sent into this world to waste thy hours in indolent repose; that every human being hath his allotted work, and that since God hath not seen fit to tell any one beforehand what that work will be, he must prepare himself by anxious culture in all directions, to execute it well when the task is assigned. Though bred to the expectation of riches, the hour may come when thou wilt find thy learning thy only dower; but whether that hour come or

not, one far more certain will yet arrive; that, namely, wherein we must give an account of every wasted minute and idle word;—look to it then, that TIME shall pay good interest in ETERNITY.

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